**The Gioconda Affair** *Frank Getlein*


# THE NEW REPUBLIC

*January 19, 1963, 35 cents*


## Deficit, Deficit, Who's Got the Deficit?

*James Tobin*

## The Limits to Chinese Power

*Alexander Eckstein*

**Listen, Yankee: A Reappraisal**

**Reporting on West Africa**

**Life in East Germany**

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# T.R.B. *from Washington*

*Get Ready to Be Bored*

★ Mr. Kennedy could hardly have operated if he had not won the initial 235-196 victory over the Rules Committee issue; having won it he is only a little better off than before. He has got a precarious one-vote majority in the 15-man committee that often acts like a third house of Congress, but he had that in 1961-62. The 15-man committee killed school, civil rights, urban affairs, youth employment, mass transportation and similar legislation in the last Congress and it may do so again.

We don't want to be always gloomy but we try to be realistic. As Congress is organized, responsibility is diffused among scores of committee chairmen and the average citizen can't follow the ball with the naked eye. The institution of Congress and, to a lesser degree politics, tends to come into contempt; not a dangerous thing immediately, perhaps, but cancerous to a democracy in the long run.

In the present fight Mr. Kennedy has won an important prestige victory right at the start, and some of it may slop over and help him to pass a quick tax cut and similar measures later on. Our guess is that it's going to be another boring two years, with unemployment rising before long above the 6 percent mark, and nobody caring much until the next bump in Wall Street.

House liberals have all but abandoned a "21-day" discharge rule to deal with an obstinate Rules Committee, or similar permanent reforms. Chances of a somewhat tighter anti-filibuster rule in the Senate look a little better, we should judge, than 50-50.

On the whole then, this Congress seems microscopically more liberal than the last. The basic power line-up in Congress remains as before: Mr. Kennedy has a 3-to-2 majority on paper but in practice Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans just about equal Kennedy votes. Each issue is a fight by itself. Note in passing that Mr. Kennedy would have lost the Rules fight if he had not won over 28 Republicans.

*You Pays Your Money . . .*

★ Who cares about consumers in America? Senator Kefauver does; he will be back doggedly investigating insurance this year as he did drugs from 1957 on. Will he get anywhere? Judge from thalidomide.

1957-62: Kefauver exposed drug price-gouging and breakdown of health safeguards. Simultaneously startled, Australia and West Germany discovered thalidomide produced Phocomelia ("seal flippers") on babies. Tranquilizer pills banned there in late 1961.

*No action in USA; no comment from mass media; flipper pills continued in US circulation under the drug law "clinical investigation" loophole that Kefauver was trying to plug.*

December, 1961: *Reader's Digest* attacked Kefauver investigation with excerpts from *Newsweek* columnist Raymond Moley and Henry Hazlitt and *Satevepost* editorial.

*Flipper pills continued circulating.*

Feb. 22, 1962 – Canada condemned the drug.

Time *mentioned Canada's action; most ignored it; import and circulation continued in US.*

April 11 – Dr. Helen Taussig told Philadelphia audience West Germany's 7,000 deformed babies might be duplicated here.

NY Times *and AP quoted Dr. Taussig, without follow-through; pills circulated.*

May 24 – Dr. Taussig showed House anti-trust subcommittee slides of flipper baby monsters; told of lone battle by Dr. Frances Kelsey against drug trade.

*No reference to Taussig testimony appeared in any popular US newspaper, magazine, radio or TV station for 11 weeks; White House sent spokesmen to meet Senators Dirksen and Eastland to emasculate Kefauver drug bill; Kefauver not invited.*

June 30 – Medical Association *Journal* and magazine *Science* gave detailed warnings, mentioning Dr. Kelsey.

*No reference in press; Kefauver bill given little chance of passage in spite of Eastland-Dirksen-White House dilution; 2,500,000 flipper pills estimated distributed in US by 1,267 doctors.*

July 15 – Morton Mintz, *Washington Post*, finally told how Dr. Kelsey held the fort in Food and Drug Administration against big business pressure for public sale of flipper pills.

*Sensation! Alert American press and TV (saturated with bowel-remedy advertisements) sprang to action. Kennedy Administration rushed to revive Kefauver bill.*

Senate passed Kefauver bill, 78-0; House, 347-0. General rejoicing; bowel remedy mass-media vindicated!

*Kefauver bill as passed by Congress controlled prescription drugs alone, not proprietary drugs (that you buy at drug stores); also omitted all provisions against price-gouging.*

Well, that's the story. . . . And now Kefauver is doggedly plugging away again at insurance rackets, including health insurance. Will he get anywhere? Ha! We expect *Reader's Digest* to attack him any day now under the banner of flipper pills and free enterprise.

*Betrayal from Within*

★ When America is betrayed at last it will not be by a spy, a mercenary, a subversive, or a Communist, it will be by a general in the Pentagon. Silly? It has already happened. An Army Air Force captain came to isolationist Senator Burton K. Wheeler (D, Mont.) on June 8, 1940 and told him FDR was taking us into war without adequate air power. Wheeler's new biography, *Yankee from the West*, tells how the captain, December 3, 1941, brought from the feuding Air Force the top military secret of the government, our detailed war plans if we should be attacked. Wheeler promptly gave it to *The Chicago Tribune* and the now-defunct *Washington Times-Herald*, which then published it – the biggest military betrayal in US history. Hitler's generals promptly grabbed it. Frank C. Waldrop, ex-*Times-Herald* editor, substantiates the incredible story in a recent article in the *Washington Post*.

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# Checkmate

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"Never was it clearer than it is today," Lord Bryce wrote about the United States Congress in the 20's, "that Nature shows no disposition to produce men with a greatness proportioned to the scale of the problems that they have to solve." Congress did, however, have able members in the 20's, and it has them today; they simply aren't in the drivers' seat. And because they are not, Congress is an engine of obstruction rather than creative advance. The antiquarians, whom only death can defeat, are at the wheel. They chair the committees; they make the rules. And to ask them to change those rules to favor their younger, do-something colleagues is like asking a banker to give away his money.

Nevertheless, the effort to make Congress more responsive to the needs of the 60's by changing its rules cannot be abandoned. Once again, Senator Clark has introduced a resolution (Representatives Henry Reuss and John Lindsey will offer a similar one in the House) to set up a joint commission to study how Congress might streamline its procedures. If they can be persuaded that nothing too radical will come of it, conservatives who control the 88th Congress – as they have controlled each Congress since 1934-36 – might go along. And if they do, reorganization proposals could be ready for legislative consideration in early '64.

It has been 17 years since Congress tried to streamline its procedures. There are 50 million more Americans today than there were then; and the nation's problems have grown proportionally in size, urgency and complexity. The LaFollette-Monroney Act of 1946 inaugurated some useful reforms, but some of them have since been shelved. To illustrate, the Act provided for joint hearings by both House and Senate committees to avoid unnecessary duplication; that has become a dead letter. It provided that Congress recess at the close of each fiscal year (June 30) and return some time in the fall; that too has been ignored. It consolidated a large number of standing committees into a smaller number; that has been got around by the creation of numerous standing subcommittees. "I would not dare," Senator Dirksen confessed, "to say to the people of Illinois that I knew all about all of the things that go on, when I serve on five subcommittees of the Committee on Appropriations, on seven subcommittees of the Committee on the Judiciary, and on three subcommittees of the Committee on Government Operations. To do so I would really need roller skates to get from one subcommittee to another, without even

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then knowing entirely everything about every subject matter which is considered by the various committees."

Senator Dirksen could be supplied with roller skates, if that would help, but it would not. Bryce came closer to what is really needed when he contrasted the character of the business before a 20th Century Congress to that of Congress a half-century earlier: "The work to be done then was largely a work of destruction. Old abuses had to be swept away, old shackles struck off, and for effecting this a few general principles were thought to suffice. The next generation was confronted by constructive work, a remodeling of old institutions in the effort to satisfy calls for social reorganization, a difficult task which needed more hard thinking and creative power than were forthcoming. Thus, while the demands on representative assemblies were heavier, the average standard of talent and character in their members did not rise." This analysis is still sound. The rules need to be changed, but it is more important to change the players. There are, as Harry Truman observed many years ago, "too many Byrds in Congress." And, one might add, Dirksens. There are, however, fewer of them than there were. A decade ago the Senate was much worse than the House; now it is dramatically improved and improving every two years.

There is something else that may be said about this question of rejuvenating Congress. One of the reasons why the Senate tolerates interminable debate; why the House Rules Committee is so powerful; why a legislative proposal is considered by three different Senate committees (as was the case with the President's communications satellite bill and his transportation program); why the heads of executive departments and agencies must return to Congress four or five times the same year to justify the same legislative request; why the seniority system ensures that rural one-party constituencies will have more influence than urban and suburban two-party ones; why the Congress still clings to its prerogative of governing the District of Columbia, thus requiring national legislators to act as town counselors – is that the electorate has long been bemused and confused by the conservative assertion that government shouldn't get much done – except for defense. Every civics class teaches the virtues of our system of political "checks and balances," disregarding the fact that those who want to check usually have the upper hand. The people *do* need protecting from the dead hand of bureaucracy; they *do* need protecting from the ambitions of bright executive technicians: even Saint Simon thought that the technicians would have to be dosed with love and religion. But it is absurd to conclude from this that a good Congress is a Congress that never puts its foot on the accelerator.

President Eisenhower had the wisdom, at least when the Democrats were in the majority in Congress, to warn against "government by checkmate." It is weak government, unprogressive government, that leads to national decline and to a breakdown in order and public confidence.

*"I think I like it."*

## Narrowing the Gap

"Our choice, therefore, boils down to one of doing nothing, and thereby risking a widening gap between our actual and potential growth in output, profits, and employment – or taking action at the federal level, to raise our entire economy to a new and higher level of business activity." In these words from the President's speech to the New York Economic Club is the heart of any tax-cut proposal: an attempt to shift the economy into a new growth rate higher than the present sluggish average of 2.9 percent a year. Any effect tax reduction might have on a potential forthcoming recession would be incidental. The aim is long-run.

Narrowing the gap between the potential and actual rates of growth is not a simple matter, however. There is substantial unused potential in the form of unemployed labor and productive capacity, and hopefully this slack would be taken up as a consequence of a tax cut. But the labor force is increasing each year, and



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technological innovations are providing higher and higher rates of output for given investment expenditures. The real problem, therefore, is not just narrowing the gap in 1963 but ensuring that it does not reappear in 1964, 1965 or 1970, when our potential should have increased substantially.

The President has put special emphasis on the role of private investment and spending in achieving a higher rate of growth. A desired rate of growth would be, say, five percent annually (compared to Western Europe's slightly higher performance over the past few years). If such a rate is to be sustained by private business, businessmen must behave as if the rate were realistic. Investment must move forward with greater vigor, and this will only happen if investors believe there will be a need for the new equipment that is created. Investors must look ahead and anticipate returns for several years, not just one. Otherwise, a sudden quick boost to current demand may do no more than reduce excess inventories and temporarily intensify the use of existing equipment (through overtime, etc.) without affecting long-run business investment plans in any substantial way.

We do not now want or need a "quickie" policy, precisely because we do not want a "quickie" recovery (which could easily end up in a subsequent recession, as short-run cycles tend to do). If investment plans for an economic advance over the next ten or more years are to be favorably affected, something must be done to lift expectations in a permanent way. Businessmen have to be convinced that the necessary growth in demand over the next few years will materialize, that contemplated higher rates of investment will not merely produce more idle capacity.

A tax cut could have this effect; a fundamental change in the proportion of income available for consumption would probably increase what is generally described as "demand." It remains to be seen, however, whether a tax cut, however large, will in itself induce a sufficient long-run change in the private sector of the economy. The imponderable psychological factors which underlie the decisions of boards of directors may not be so easily influenced. Additional measures may very well be required if a self-sustaining trend is to develop.

It ought to be stressed for this very reason that a simultaneous reduction in government expenditures, as recommended by General Eisenhower and others, would be disastrous. Demand is already far behind the nation's ability to produce; cutting back the public elements of demand at this time would merely counter the rise in business expectations that would otherwise materialize. It would take the steam out of the drive for increased investment.

HARALD MALMGREN

# FOREIGN REPORTS

## *About-Face in Peru*

★ Why did the Peruvian military junta arrest 1,000 people as ringleaders in a "Red Plot" to overthrow the government when it had hitherto been busily encouraging Communist activities? This baffling question remains after the regime's announcements of January 5-6 that it had uncovered a vast Communist scheme, engineered from Moscow, Havana and (of all places) Prague which was about to culminate in a wave of strikes, rioting, and assassination of the four-member junta and other government officials.

Ever since it overthrew the democratic government last July, the junta has refused to deal with the large, moderately left-wing Apra Party, and has preferred to work with Communists instead. Recently it declined to recognize Aprista members as legitimate leaders of certain unions, accepting Communists in their place. It has listened sympathetically to intellectual Communists who appear from time at the Peruvian Center for Advanced Military Studies, a sort of Rand Corp., which the junta ardently supports and where planners forsake more practical matters to dream of building roads atop the Andes after the manner of the Incas.

The junta's own extraordinarily sketchy reform program has been announced but never implemented. Unrest has spread from such densely populated areas as La Convencion valley into the north and through the cities. By December the regime was confronted in quick succession by violent strikes on the docks, in the silver and copper mines and on sugar plantations.

At Cerro de Pasco, the large American-owned mining installation, the unions had demanded a 40 percent wage increase (subsequently dropped to 20 percent). The company was willing to pay eight percent, and over union protest the regime intervened and decreed an eight percent rise. (Mine workers are not badly paid by Peruvian standards. In 1960, they averaged $1.39 a day. Fringe benefits boosted this to $2.22. A Peruvian subsistence wage is said to be about $2.50 a day.) Refusing to accept the wage increase, workers – stirred up by Communists according to the company and the regime – marched on the mining installations, burned two warehouses to the ground and partially ruined other equipment, altogether worth $4 million. The regime then ordered the 13,000 miners back to work, threatening them with loss of jobs should they refuse. Forty percent responded; the others either have been fired or probably will be.

Elections are still promised for next June. Indeed, the stated reason for the arrests was to insure the possibility of these elections. Nonetheless, in addition to the



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alleged Communist members of the plot, the junta imprisoned members of virtually all political parties, and raided the offices of a leading Aprista newspaper. It then announced it would push through land reapportionment schemes in La Convencion valley where farms are either too large or too small to be tilled effectively. Perhaps the junta has decided that the Communists are no more tolerable than the Apristas and has decided to govern permanently. If so, elections will not be needed.

### *Senegal's Predicament*

★ The unsuccessful coup d'etat attempted on December 17 by Senegal's Premier Mamadou Dia against President Leopold Senghor and the National Assembly was unexpected, for Senghor and Dia had been long-time allies in the Senegalese nationalist movement and had acted in concert against anti-government "plots" in late 1961 and early 1962. The coup dramatized an unresolved difference within the governing party about the priorities of economic-social development, Franco-Senegalese economic relations, and the proper role for the *marabouts* (traditional Muslim religious leaders) and for Dakar's thriving commercial-bureaucratic elite.

Senegal's economy depends on the export of peanuts to France. Like all the former French African territories except Guinea and to a lesser extent Mali, Senegal sells its products on the protected French market at more than world prices. French imports, in turn, have protected markets at higher-than-world prices in Senegal. French trading firms have until recently controlled almost all economic life and are still the primary influence. In return, France provides expatriate salaries, direct subsidies for current government operations, development grants and loans.

All these former French colonies must balance their desire for greater economic freedom against the considerable danger of economic collapse. Only Guinea has made a total break; its economic disruption is not yet resolved. Only the Ivory Coast has argued strongly in favor of the present relationship. The rest accept it, with varying degrees of uneasiness. They know it is unlikely that either the US or the Soviet bloc could or would match the aid which France has provided. It is also doubtful whether they would like dependence on Moscow or Washington any better than dependence on Paris. A modest reduction in the French orientation of their economies is their usual aim.

Senegal's current development plan reflects this modesty. Its major target is increased peanut productivity and a cut in food imports. Yet fulfilling even this goal will require enormous effort in rural areas and restraint in Dakar. (The Dakar elite is the largest in French Africa; its European component of 40,000 is almost half of all Europeans in French West Africa.) Senghor has not hesitated to refuse urban demands for wage increases, but he has yet to reduce consumption or curtail food and luxury imports. He hopes rather to increase Senegal's domestic food production by putting underemployed labor and land to work.

The gap in living standards between the *bourgeoisie de la fonction publique* and the peasants is enormous and conspicuous. It is a painful sight to the young, underpaid technicians who work with the peasants. They see their program, *animation rurale*, a modestly-financed effort at the introduction of new agricultural techniques through local initiative, as the key to rural social reform. They are strongly egalitarian, openly critical of the urban elites and closer in spirit to Dia and Sékou Touré than to Senghor. Senegalese unity is their goal, and, in the absence of the elaborate political structures of Guinea and Mali, they visualize *animation rurale* as the means.

The technicians face growing resistance from the Muslim *marabouts*. The *marabouts* first accepted government marketing channels and producer cooperatives as purely technical devices likely to increase their own income. But now they see *animation rurale* as a serious challenge to their widespread political authority. Senghor, a Catholic, has been more responsive to *marabout* pressure than Dia, a Muslim who has an interest in modernizing Islam and curtailing its secular role.

The arrest of Dia and several of his supporters in the government after the coup is likely to discourage the administrators of *animation rurale* and to strengthen the *marabouts'* resistance to further social reform. The young technicians may leave their work in frustration, turning either to more comfortable and better-paying work in Dakar or to the now-stifled opposition parties. If the governing party loses all impulse to risk reform, and if Senghor fails to control the *marabouts* and the urban elite, the initiative may shift to this opposition. Still, no mass uprising is likely. As elsewhere in French Africa, stability may depend in large part on Brussels, where negotiation will take place about the price France can pay for Senegalese peanuts. If Senegal loses her overpriced French market without winning an international marketing agreement, Senghor's position will be badly damaged.

### *Khrushchev and Ulbricht: Now What?*

★ Although the Sixth East German Socialist Unity Party Congress which opens January 15 will undoubtedly echo Walter Ulbricht's recent calls for economic progress rather than anti-Western militance, it seems unlikely that Mr. Khrushchev has chosen to attend solely in hope of bolstering the cadres' spirits along such prosaic lines. He is expected to make new proposals for "liquidating the legacy of World War II" in



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Germany, perhaps urging a confederation of the two German states. This could be linked by him to renewed demands for an all-German peace conference. The Socialist Unity Party organs have already been proclaiming the virtues of such a "compromise solution" of the German question and have related it directly to the Soviet policy of peaceful coexistence in Europe. Confederation would mean mutual recognition of sovereignty by the two German governments, followed by the beginnings of cooperation in fields of common interest.

There is also a chance that the Congress may announce the need for a new constitution, and such a document might well betoken the "finality" and the coming of age of the East German Communist state. In addition Ulbricht may give clearer indications of what he meant by the regime's adopting certain Western economic practices. There may be a major manifesto in favor of expanded East-West German trade.

In all probability this Party Congress will be conducted in a calmer atmosphere than its predecessors. In 1954, the Fourth Congress bombastically proclaimed the economic Bolshevization of Eastern Germany; in 1958, the Fifth bitterly attacked capitalist society while demanding the total "socialization" of the community. This time, East German leaders have been speaking moderately in the weeks leading up to the Congress. Ulbricht adopted an almost pleading note in his New Year's statement to the East Germans, asking for "some kind" of direct relationship between the two German states. Since then the party press has been suggesting that greater freedom of movement in the whole of Germany and renewed cultural and sporting contacts could be arranged – if the Federal Republic would tacitly recognize East German sovereignty and existing East German frontiers (including, of course, the Oder-Neisse line).

As so often in the past, the West has left the diplomatic initiative on Berlin and the German question completely to the Soviet bloc. The Congress will be able, if it wishes, to castigate the bovine inaction of the West German government. It will strut the stage as the only German regime with concrete proposals and compromise plans and, indeed, as the only regime ready to follow what now appears to be the most realistic path to German reunification.

# The Road to Rome

*London*

The decisive bout of negotiations in Brussels began last week. If it ends without a major breakthrough on at least one of the issues still under dispute Macmillan may face irresistible pressure to withdraw Britain's application for membership of the Common Market. Conservative backbenchers see Europe's resistance to Macmillan's overtures as a calculated insult to British prestige; and British business, though still anxious to get into Europe, would rather break off the negotiations altogether than prolong the corroding uncertainty.

The fundamental obstacle, as always, is de Gaulle. Britain is now feverishly mobilizing her well-wishers inside the Common Market to overcome French opposition. Support from Belgium and Holland, though welcome, cannot be decisive – indeed de Gaulle's personal dislike of M. Spaak may make Belgian pressure worse than useless. The German Foreign Minister, Gerhard Schroeder, has recently been in London, making German support conditional on British pressure to admit Germany to the projected NATO nuclear club. Whitehall has given up the hope of effective help from Bonn: Adenauer continues to dominate this sector in German policy, and in any case the German officials in Brussels are no match for their French counterparts.

So Britain's hopes rest largely on Italy, which since the "opening to the Left" in Rome has been the most enthusiastic supporter of Britain's entry to the Common Market as a counterpoise to the Bonn-Paris axis. But so far Italy has failed to stand up to determined pressure from the French on all the major issues. Last month the *Economist* concluded: "The British have been culpably slow to grasp the fact that Italy is an important country nowadays. The Italians are being even slower: one consequence of importance is that unpleasantness has to be faced, when necessary, to ensure that one's view is heeded."

What kind of pressure could the Italians apply? Working alone, or even with help from the Low Countries, they cannot force the French out of their strict interpretation of the Rome Treaty by economic threats. Not even Britain's best friends are prepared to scuttle the Market if Britain is not admitted. The Italian's leverage, if any, is political. Signor La Malfa, the Italian Minister of the Budget, has gone to the root of the problem by suggesting that if de Gaulle keeps Britain out of the Common Market Italy should develop political and cultural relations with Britain parallel with those of France with Germany, and invite the Low Countries to join this new London-Rome axis. To make this threat effective in Brussels, however, Britain and Italy will immediately have to fix a date, shortly after this round of talks on the Common Market is over, for Macmillan's visit to Rome.

There are difficulties about La Malfa's proposal. It may not command sufficient support from the right-wing Christian Democrats in Rome. No matter what Italy does, de Gaulle may prefer to cultivate his bilateral relations with Bonn rather than admit Britain to the Common Market. And there are signs that Macmillan is still dithering between the incompatible alter-



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natives of trying to bully de Gaulle into surrender by organizing resistance among the "Europeans" of the Six, and bribing de Gaulle into acquiescence by offering British atomic and military aid for France's nationalist ambitions. The British Minister for Air, Julian Amery – the Debré of the Conservative Party – has been exploring the latter possibility in Paris.

But if anything can be done to exert pressure on Paris in behalf of the British application, I believe La Malfa has found the way. And if the Brussels talks break down, his proposal is the best guarantee against the political dangers which could then arise.

DENIS HEALEY, M.P.

# 100 Million Frenchmen

*Paris*

New Year's messages by the world's statesmen have the notoriously limited function of filling otherwise empty news space – a useful enough function to be sure. This year there was an exception, one so out of the ordinary that the newspapers appear to have largely missed it.

President de Gaulle, as might be expected, supplied the exception. In a seemingly throwaway line in his message of good wishes to the French people, this extraordinary man made the staggering suggestion that France in the future should have a population not of less than 50 million, as at present, but of 100 million. In so doing he:

1. Recognized the hopelessness of the "equality" of Western Europe, let alone France by itself, with the two superpowers unless Europe has more population.

2. Knocked in the head the accepted idea that population is a "world" problem and put it where it belongs, on the national plane. In a word, Mexico and Brazil and India no doubt need less population, or certainly less population growth, but France will probably do better with more. For that matter, so might Upper Volta and Malaya and West Germany do better with more, but not Indonesia or Colombia.

3. Accepted as an asset what appears to be already happening – a sort of "third wave" in demographic evolution. Allowing for some oversimplification, the first demographic wave is overpopulation stimulated by poverty; the second is relative population stability as desperate poverty more or less disappears; the third, evidenced by the United States, is a new population exuberance induced by general affluence.

Unlike everybody else, de Gaulle looked at what was happening and decided to take advantage of it – with the greater interests of France in mind. De Gaulle's powers do not, perhaps surprisingly, extend to the ability to produce a doubling of the French population, but his present government's actions, like that of his original postwar government, can do a certain amount by way of family allowances and the like. It would be a rash man to predict that France will *not* have a population of 100 million in some foreseeable future – long before, as Keynes had it, "we are all dead."

And why not? France is a rich land, like the United States. She is producing more and more foodstuffs each year, and she has only begun the agricultural revolution. There is no reasonable doubt that France can feed 100 million people with her own land; there is equally little doubt that she will eventually produce more than enough to feed that number whether or not they exist. Starving Mexicans are not relevant to the equation; they will be equally starving whether France has 50 million or 100 million population, unless the whole organization of our world radically changes, which simply doesn't happen in this life.

But if France has 100 million, there *is* a difference for France and perhaps for Europe. Already the "third wave" is hitting Britain (the 1956 population projections, based on probable birthrates, now seem to have been sharply mistaken on the low side). There is good reason to believe that it is hitting, or will hit, the rest of Europe too, with Italy perhaps lagging a bit. And of course it must, if there is to be any European hope of equality with the United States.

Jean Monnet and others struggled to create a European community that had some hope of parity, in population terms as well as others, with the US. The community publications still bandy proudly the figure of 170 million for the six members of the Common Market. And what has happened? The US figure has just hit 186 million, heading up fast.

And so, in a world wringing its hands about the dangers of excessive population, Charles de Gaulle sees, quite accurately, that there is not enough of the kind of population that he wants. Narrow view? In terms of global intellectuals, yes; in terms of the practical politics of the world in the next three or four decades, probably no.

One knows that de Gaulle's view stems from the deep awareness of Frenchmen that their gradual national decline after the time of Napoleon was due in part to a failure of their population to grow; one knows that he is very traditional at the same time as being daring, in keeping with the mentality of his country; one knows that chauvinism is supposed to be out of date in the hydrogen-bomb world.

But none of this makes de Gaulle wrong. Least of all does it make him unrealistic. If France has 100 million population in the next century, the chances are France will count for more – and the Mexicans will probably still be starving, quietly as ever.

EDWIN L. DALE, JR.



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# Ulbricht's Hard Line

*Bonn*

Even before the announcement that Khrushchev would come to East Berlin in mid-January, there had been hints of the Ulbricht regime pursuing a "softer" line, even encouraging statements by Walter Ulbricht himself. (One of the most significant, that justice would in the future be administered with greater humanness, passed unnoticed in Western Germany.) This is, moreover, the time of year when the regime sometimes amnesties a few dozen political prisoners as a sop to the sentimentality of its subjects. But the story of Harry Seidel, until last August the 4,000-meters cycling champion of the East German Republic and today one of the 10,000 to 12,000 "political prisoners" is a useful corrective to optimism about "liberalization."

Harry Seidel "escaped" from the East German Republic to West Berlin on August 13, 1961. More precisely he happened to be in West Berlin when the Communist Wall went up, and decided to remain. On September 5 he crossed clandestinely into East Berlin and fetched his wife and child, smuggling them across the Wall. The People's Police accordingly arrested his wife's 56-year-old mother and five other relatives of hers. The mother is still in prison and has not been brought to trial.

Next, Harry Seidel's own mother was arrested and jailed. Her "crime": trying to join her son (she is a widow). She was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment. These reprisals were vicious, inhuman and unjustified – Frau Seidel's mother and relations had not even tried to escape to the West. They resulted in Harry Seidel setting himself up as a Scarlet Pimpernel, and successfully helping a number of East German citizens to reach West Berlin. But on November 15, he was caught at the eastern end of a tunnel which he and his friends had dug from the American sector.

On December 29 Seidel was sentenced to imprisonment for life, with hard labor. In the East German High Court the Public Prosecutor branded him as a "terrorist" and an "agent of the power politics of the Bonn ultras." He was found guilty of opposing the East German State and "head-hunting" for East German workers to enslave them to West German capitalists – a strange description of his widowed mother.

Seidel's sentence was the tenth of its kind to be imposed in 1962 for so-called "political crimes." During that year, three other East Germans were sentenced to death for similar crimes. Around 350 were sent to prison. It must be remembered that not one of these people committed what would rank as a criminal action in any civilized community. Since the Berlin Wall, 1,350 acts of violence on the part of East German police and soldiers, committed within sight and sound of the frontiers of the East German Republic, have been registered by the West Berlin and West German authorities. About 700 of these have occurred on the borders of West Berlin, the remainder on the interzonal frontier between the two German states. In one-fifth of these cases the West German authorities have been able to learn the names of the perpetrators. Along the Berlin Wall itself, armed East Germans have fired on between 400 and 500 occasions. They have hurled more than 2,000 tear-gas bombs into West Berlin, which they have ringed in with over 80 miles of treble and even quadrupled barbed wire, 150 observation-towers and hundreds of machine-gun posts.

During 1962 also, more than 1,100 East Germans were arrested within sight of the Wall. Most of them have been sent to prison for attempting that grave crime of "Flight from the Republic." But many others have been imprisoned on the flimsiest pretexts. A dance-band conductor went to prison for refusing to play "socialist" tunes or croon "progressive" lyrics. At Jena, university professors were imprisoned for "deviationist" philosophy. Some members of the audience at the performance of *Wilhelm Tell* in East Berlin's Deutsche Theater had narrow escapes. They applauded at the "wrong" moment during Schiller's play, which contains stirring references to political liberty. All the lights in the theater were at once switched up; Communist sentries posted in the gangways tried to identify the "offenders."

During 1962 the East German regime further developed the practice of sending "suspects" to forced-labor camps, without trial. There are estimated to be 25 of these camps with around 8,000 inmates, who are "leased" to factories and to collective-farms. Forced labor means a minimum wage, of which 80 percent is retained by the State.

According to the West German Government, there were more than 10,000 applications made during the year by East Germans to be allowed to rejoin their own families in Western Germany or West Berlin. Of these, 2,000 were wives wishing to rejoin their husbands and around 1,000 were young men or women engaged to be married to someone in Western Germany. Another 1,000 were mothers with children, and there were



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around 400 small children in Eastern Germany who were isolated from their families and not allowed to rejoin them. Only a trickle of East Germans rejoining relatives in Western Germany is permitted; they are almost always over working age or physically disabled.

If this is a "softer" line, what is a "harder" line? Propaganda is pumped into tiny tots, whose earliest reading classes are occupied with "fairy tales" about the Red Riding Hood "who loved Walter Ulbricht" and the "evil Genie, Adenauer" who intervened in the story of Aladdin's lamp. Children are taught to denounce their own parents for such "offenses" as listening to Western broadcasts, and to report them to their school-teachers and youth leaders. The owners of a Dresden puppet theater, Teddy Kuchenmeister, has been warned because his chief puppet, Stuelpner-Karl, only makes jokes in a broad Saxon accent and refuses to "talk politics." The system of organized spying on the factory workers, copied from the Nazis, has reached monstrous proportions – it is estimated that there are now 3,000 guards and spies to "look after" 13,000 workers at the Lauchhammer coal combine.

Is it surprising that economic plans are not being fulfilled and that around 14,000 East Germans have escaped to the West *since* the Berlin Wall was built?

TERENCE PRITTIE

# Deficit, Deficit, Who's Got the Deficit?

## *by James Tobin*

Question: *Sir, on that point, what do you think of the President's tax cut proposal and his idea that it would spur revenues even though we would have what he calls a temporary deficit? Does this make sense to you?*

Answer: *My own background is that of a small businessman who has had to scratch right hard to keep his head above water at times. The arithmetic of this thing just doesn't work out. I couldn't in my business increase my expenses and reduce my revenues and stay alive. I don't think a government can do it without an eventual change in our form of government.*

*– Interview with* REP. HOWARD W. SMITH *(D, Va.), Chairman of the House Committee on Rules.*

For every buyer there must be a seller, and for every lender a borrower. One man's expenditure is another's receipt. My debts are your assets, my deficits your surplus. If all of us were consistently "neither borrower nor lender," as Polonius advised, no one would ever need to violate the revered wisdom of Mr. Micawber. But if the prudent among us insist on running and lending surpluses, some of the rest of us are willy-nilly going to borrow to finance budget deficits.

In the United States today one budget which is usually left holding a deficit is that of the federal government. When no one else borrows the surpluses of the thrifty, the Treasury ends up doing so. Since the role of debtor and borrower is thought to be particularly unbecoming to the federal government, the nation feels frustrated and guilty.

Unhappily, crucial decisions of economic policy are too largely blind reactions to these feelings. The truisms that borrowing is the counterpart of lending, and deficits the counterpart of surpluses, are overlooked in popular and Congressional discussions of government budgets and taxes. Both guilt feelings and policy are based on serious misunderstanding of the origins of federal budget deficits and surpluses.

American *households* and *financial institutions* consistently run financial surpluses. They have money to lend, beyond their own needs to borrow. Chart 1 shows the growth in their combined surpluses since the war; it also shows some tendency for these surpluses to rise in periods of recession and slack business activity. Of course, many private households have financial deficits. They pay out more than their incomes for food, clothing, cars, appliances, houses, taxes, etc. They draw on savings accounts, redeem savings bonds, sell securities, mortgage houses or incur installment debt. But deficit households are far outweighed by surplus households. As a group American *households* and *non-profit institutions* have in recent years shown a net financial surplus averaging about $15 billion a year – that is, households are ready to lend, or put into equity investments, about $15 billion a year more than they are prepared to borrow. In addition, *financial institutions* regularly generate a lendable surplus, now of the order

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of $5 billion a year. For the most part these institutions – banks, savings and loan associations, insurance companies, pension funds, and the like – are simply intermediaries which borrow and re-lend the public's money. Their surpluses result from the fact that they earn more from their lending operations than they distribute or credit to their depositors, shareowners and policyholders.

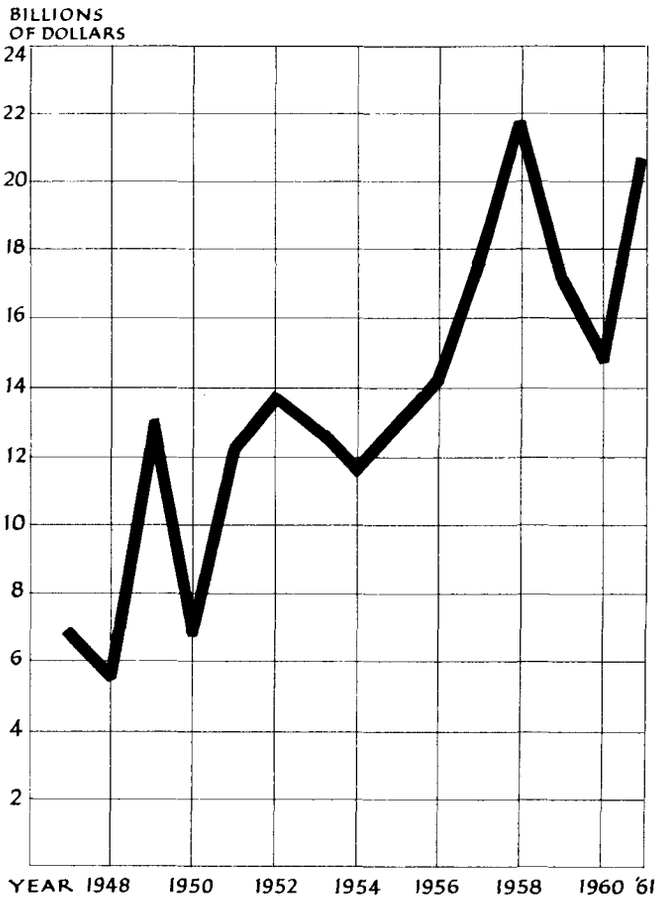
Who is to use the $20 billion of surplus funds available from households and financial institutions? *State and local governments* as a group have been averaging $3-4 billion a year of net borrowing. Pressures of the expanding populations of children, adults, houses and automobiles, plus the difficulties of increasing tax revenues, force these governments to borrow in spite of strictures against government debt. *Unincorporated businesses*, including farms, absorb another $3-4 billion. To the *rest of the world* we can lend perhaps $2 billion a year. We cannot lend abroad – net – more than the surplus of our exports over our imports of goods and services, and some of that surplus we give away in foreign aid. We have to earn the lendable surplus in tough international competition. Recent experience shows clearly that when we try to lend and invest too much money abroad, we either have to borrow it back or else pay in gold.

These borrowers account for $8-10 billion. The remainder – some $10-12 billion – must be used either by *non-financial corporate business* or by the *federal government*. Only if corporations as a group take $10-12 billion of external funds, by borrowing or issuing new equities, can the federal government expect to break even. This is, moreover, an understatement of what is required to keep the federal debt from rising. For the federal government itself provides annually $3 to $4 billion of new lending; and the Treasury would have to borrow to finance these federal lending programs even if the government absorbed no *net* funds from the economy. It is *gross* federal borrowing which offends the fiscal conservative, whether or not the proceeds are used to acquire other financial assets.

The moral is inescapable, if startling. If you would like the federal deficit to be smaller, the deficits of business must be bigger. And would you like the federal government to run a surplus and reduce its debt? Then business deficits must be big enough to absorb that surplus as well as the funds available from households and financial institutions.

That does not mean that business must be run at a loss – quite the contrary. Sometimes, it is true, unprofitable businesses are forced to borrow or to spend financial reserves just to stay afloat; this was a major reason for business deficits in the depths of the Great Depression. But normally it is businesses with good profits and good prospects which borrow or sell new shares of stock, in order to finance expansion and

CHART 1 – *Financial Surpluses of Consumers, Non-profit Institutions, and Financial Institutions, 1947-61*




SOURCE: *Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System*

modernization. As the President of AT&T can testify, heavy reliance on outside funds, far from being a distress symptom, is an index and instrument of growth in the profitability and worth of the corporation. Financial deficits incurred by business firms – or by households and governments – do not usually mean that they are living beyond their means and consuming their capital. Financial deficits are typically the means of accumulating non-financial assets – real property in the form of inventories, buildings and equipment.

When does business run big deficits? When do corporations draw heavily on the capital markets? The record is clear: when business is very good, when sales are pressing hard on capacity, when businessmen see further expansion ahead. Though corporations' internal funds – depreciation allowances and plowed-back profits – are large during boom times, their investment programs are even larger.

Chart 2 shows the financial deficits or surpluses of corporate business and of the federal government since the war. Three facts stand out. First, the federal government has big deficits when corporations run surpluses or small deficits – and vice versa. Second, gov-



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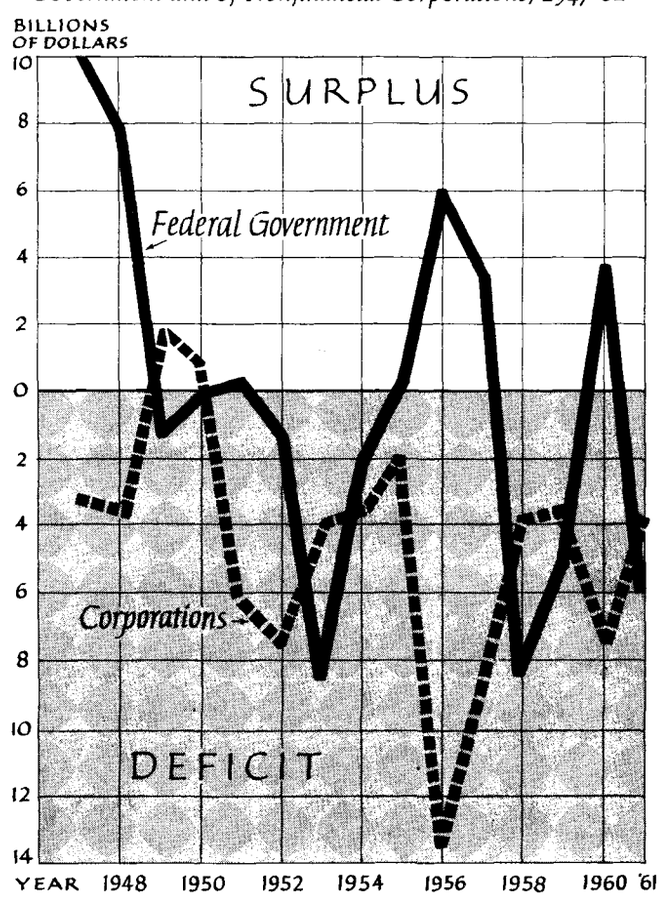
ernment surpluses and business deficits reach their peaks in periods of economic expansion, when industrial capacity is heavily utilized: 1947-48, 1951-52, 1956-57. Third, the combined deficit of corporate business and the federal government is greater now than in the early postwar years; this is the counterpart of the upward trend in available surpluses as shown in Chart 1.

Recession, idle capacity, unemployment, economic slack – these are the enemies of the balanced government budget. When the economy is faltering, households have more surpluses available to lend, and business firms are less inclined to borrow them.

The federal government will not succeed in cutting its deficit by steps which depress the economy, perpetuate excess capacity, and deter business firms from using outside funds. Raising taxes and cutting expenses seem like obvious ways to balance the budget. But because of their effects on private spending, lending and borrowing, they may have exactly the contrary result. Likewise, lowering taxes and raising government expenditures may so stimulate private business activity and private borrowing that the federal deficit is in the end actually reduced.

CHART 2 – *Net Financial Surpluses, Deficits of the Federal Government and of Nonfinancial Corporations, 1947-61*




SOURCE: *Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System*

This may seem paradoxical, and perhaps it is. Why is it that the homely analogy between family finance and government finance, on which our decisive national attitudes toward federal fiscal policy are so largely based, misleads us? If John Jones on Maple Street is spending $8,700 a year but taking in only $8,000, the remedy is clear. All Mr. Jones need do to balance the family budget is resolutely to live within his income, either spending some $700 less or working harder to increase his earnings. Jones can safely ignore the impact of either action on the incomes and expenditures of others and the possible ultimate feedback on his own job and income. The situation of John F. Kennedy on Pennsylvania Avenue, spending $87 billion a year against tax revenues of $80 billion is quite different. Suppose he spends $7 billion less, or tries through higher tax rates to boost federal revenues by $7 billion. He cannot ignore the inevitable boomerang effect on federal finances. These measures will lower the sales, payrolls and profits of business firms, whether they were selling aircraft to the government or pleasure boats to taxpayers. These business firms will in turn spend less for new machinery; their employees and stockholders will spend less on vacation trips. This chain is not endless. But before it ends, it will shrink total spending and income in the economy by a multiple of the original $7 billion. The federal tax base shrinks correspondingly. In the end the federal deficit will be reduced by much less than $7 billion; perhaps it will even be increased.

Incidentally, many of the very critics who are most vocal in chiding the government for fiscal sin advocate policies which would make fiscal virtue even more elusive. They want to keep private borrowing in check by tight credit policies and high interest rates. They want to increase corporations' *internal* flow of funds by bigger depreciation allowances and higher profit margins, making business still less dependent on external funds to finance investment, even in boom times. When these apostles of sound finance also tell the government to shun external finance, have they done their arithmetic? If everyone is self-financing, who then will borrow the surpluses?

The nation is paying a high price for the misapplied homely wisdom which guides federal fiscal policy. The real toll is measured by unemployment, idle capacity, lost production and sluggish economic growth. But fiscal conservatism is also self-defeating. It does not even achieve its own aim, the avoidance of government deficits. Federal fiscal and monetary policies consciously and unashamedly designed to stimulate the economy would have sufficient justification in economic expansion itself. But they might well "improve" the federal budget too – by inducing business to use the private surpluses that now have no destination other than a rising federal debt.



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# Reporting West Africa

*by Walter Z. Laqueur*

Mr. John Hatch, a university lecturer and correspondent of the London *New Statesman*, was asked to leave Sierra Leone not long ago because he had mentioned in one of his dispatches the uncontested fact that the practice of female circumcision still existed in some parts of that country. The incident highlighted the perils facing the foreign correspondent in West Africa. Sierra Leone is certainly one of the more progressive states in that part of the world, and the *New Statesman* cannot be charged with lack of enthusiasm for emergent Africa. Yet Mr. Hatch had to go. Some African countries are more liberal than others, yet both correspondents and visiting scholars have by now become very careful indeed in their published comments if they want their visas renewed or intend to come back. Censorship is probably most stringent in Ghana where, I believe, it would be an offense to cable abroad the text of the editorial of the local afternoon paper; this is intelligible for it is easy to imagine what impression quotations from Mr. Heyman's *Evening News* would make in Washington and London; they are strictly for domestic consumption and should not be read abroad. It is more difficult to understand the restrictions elsewhere. True, many African countries are now facing awkward problems, yet most of their embarrassing difficulties can be found in the not-too-distant past of Europe and the United States as well, sometimes in a more virulent form. Honest reporting from West Africa would not diminish sympathies in the West for this part of the world, except perhaps among those who do not feel very friendly anyway. Yet the colonial experience of many African politicians has made them allergic to most criticism, however well meant and constructive in spirit.

The worst that could be said about present day Nigeria, for example, is that the country is experiencing growing pains. North Nigeria and the South are not reconciled to each other; the current population census has become a major bone of contention. The South has maintained for a long time that the dominant position of the conservative North in the Federal Government and in Parliament is unjustified; it now charges the government, and in particular some British officials, with falsifying the election returns, and thus buttressing the position of the North. The Northerners have countered with similar charges *vis-à-vis* the South. The disintegration of Nigeria would be a major disaster for Africa; the South incidentally would suffer less from such division than the much poorer North, yet it is the North that shows at present less willingness to compromise. The rulers of the North know that the Federal army is mainly Northern in origin which makes a military *coup* somewhat unlikely for the time being. Yet the winds of political and social change are bound to reach Northern Nigeria sooner or later. Watching the ceremonial court of the Emir of Kano in session with his private police in attendance and the indigo-dyed attendants, one could not help feeling that this way of life in an important Northern center of Nigeria (so eloquently described by the Nigerian novelist, Cyprian Ekwensi) is bound soon to disappear.

Other African states have their North-South problem – Uganda, Guinea, Cameroun, for instance. Yet nowhere perhaps is it so acute as in Nigeria. The main problem facing the government will be the quarter of a million Nigerians leaving school who hope for good jobs in town. There has been a revolution in Nigerian education; only 12 years ago about 90 percent of all Nigerians were illiterate, whereas at present all but a very few children in Southern Nigeria go to school. The number of universities is rapidly growing; unfortunately there are far too many prospective lawyers and not enough physicians and technologists. Academic unemployment is in a way more dangerous than industrial unemployment. The country is making great strides; whole new industries have developed over the last years. Even if the targets of the Six Year Plan should not be achieved – an increase in production of four percent per year and a gross national product of $4.2 billion in 1967 – there is no danger of serious crises, for Nigeria is a very rich country, and in the villages (very much in contrast to India) there is enough to eat for everyone.

Yet those who have been to school, let alone university, do not want to go back to their villages. Unless the government is able to come to terms with this fact, it will find itself in great political difficulties. Students are restive even now; there have been some disorders recently in Nsukku and Ibadan universities. While I was in the Nigerian capital last month the press reported that a considerable number of Ibadan students would not be able to complete their studies for lack of

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funds – a news item given much publicity in Ghana where university education is free. What discontent there is among the intelligentsia finds expression in radical pan-Africanism, not in Communism, for the time being. (The Soviet embassy staff in Lagos is restricted to 11 – cook, nanny, driver and all; Soviet publications may be imported but are not very much in appearance. As for the Chinese, their activities in these parts seem hardly worth mentioning.) Nor has the Peace Corps become more liked in certain quarters. Mr. Ememe, a member of the Nigerian parliament, wrote the other day in the *Sunday Express* (not the most extremist of Nigerian newspapers) that "as an avenue of dumping surplus labor from the US the Peace Corps gives President Kennedy an opportunity to export his country's unemployed to Nigeria. Ninety-nine percent of the Peace Corps personnel are unemployed boys and girls who otherwise could not find employment in the USA. . . . The Peace Corps is a proven instrument of international espionage and ideological infiltration."

Philosophical observers on the West African scene have learned to take such irritations in their stride. This is especially so in a country like Ghana where the press, though government-owned, is (to put it cautiously) both very outspoken and unpredictable. A violent attack against America in general and the US ambassador in particular may be followed by bewilderment that Washington is not as enthusiastic as it should be about underwriting some major new economic project in Accra. A virulent attack against the "revisionism of the Tito clique of traitors," reprinted from the Chinese press, may be coupled with professions of friendship for Socialist Yugoslavia. Chancellor Adenauer and West Germany are usually depicted as the standard bearer of neo-colonialism and the most reactionary forces in general; yet the very same papers published last December a special supplement praising the great political, social and economic achievements of the *Bundesrepublik*.

The press in Ghana is one of the strongholds of what is somewhat loosely called the "left-wing" of Dr. Nkrumah's party; the "Bureau of African affairs" which disseminates propaganda in other parts of the continent, is another. I talked to Kofi Batsa, who works in this Bureau and is the editor of the new weekly *Spark* (Iskra) on the day the very first issue of his new paper came out. He declared himself in favor of the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. What proletariat, what bourgeoisie? Somehow the statement made no more sense than *I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas* heard the evening before in the tropical heat of the "Lido," Accra's main night spot. Mr. Batsa and some of his colleagues may have made their decision between West and East, it is not for non-alignment either. Yet they are not numerous, and their decision may not even be final. Mr. Batsa admitted that he and his friends found it heavy going to transform the Ghanaian national movement into an *avant-guard* ideological party and thus to prepare the "second revolution."

Nkrumah himself has not shown much initiative since the attempts against his life, nor has he appeared very often in public. One exception was the recent Africanists Congress in Accra where he appeared several hours earlier than scheduled to open the conference – presumably to throw potential assassins off the track. One cannot fail to note in Ghana (and this is undoubtedly to the credit of Nkrumah and his party) that they have tackled Africanization seriously; no European is left in an important policy-making position. (There are some expatriate European and South African advisers around; their influence could be detected in Nkrumah's appeal not to support India in its conflict with China.) Getting the Europeans out of top positions may not be the most efficient and rational course of action, but politically, and even more psychologically, it was probably a necessity; it has certainly helped to restore the Ghanaians' self-respect; they may commit mistakes but they are their own mistakes.

Recently, Dr. Nkrumah has made some conciliatory gestures. He released from detention Joe Appiah, one of the opposition leaders. Yet much remains to be done to restore to the leading party the measure of popular support it once possessed. In the present critical situation, Nkrumah needs the help of all his party stalwarts, left, right and center; he may have to sanction the activities of Mr. Batsa and his "left-wing" associates, too. He needs them, just as they, for the time being, cannot do without the prestige of the one really popular leader of their party, even if they regard his political views as half-hearted and out-of-date.

There is a curious feeling of a political hangover in official Ghana these days. Five years ago, Nkrumah could speak on behalf of all West Africa; by now almost the whole continent has attained independence, but not under Nkrumah's leadership. Ghana has about seven million inhabitants and is still very much dependent on the cocoa harvest. The material basis for a leading role by Ghana in Africa is too narrow, even if the Gold Coast has been traditionally one of the most advanced parts of the continent. In theory, Ghana, Guinea and Mali have merged into a larger West African political and economic unit; yet it appears that Dr. Nkrumah's idealism and willingness to collaborate have not quite been reciprocated by his partners, who were quite willing to take substantial loans from him but do not really consult him on political questions of importance. Even little Togo, which Nkrumah thinks should be part of Ghana, continues to exist; the feeling of frustration in Accra makes itself felt in attacks against the West and neo-Colonialism.



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# The Limits to Chinese Power

## *Could Peking Afford to Fight a Prolonged War?*

*by Alexander Eckstein*

Here is China, bedeviled by severe agricultural difficulties, food shortages and economic stagnation, and still able to wage a war along the Indian border. Does this mean that China has the economic strength successfully to support a prolonged Sino-Indian conflict?

First, we have to understand the burden imposed by the border war on China's economy, and while we have no hard information on this, some things are fairly clear.

Ever since the "pacification" of Tibet, Chinese Communist garrisons stationed there have been augmented, new road construction projects and military building programs have been initiated, military stores and supplies were brought in, and the border guard was strengthened in numbers and equipment. Since Tibet's agricultural and industrial capacity was very limited, the troops had to be supplied largely from China proper. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the Chinese military stationed in Tibet were capable of engaging in local skirmishes and in limited border warfare. On the other hand, for the more wide ranging offensive against India in November, the Tibetan garrisons and supplies had to be reinforced, particularly with some heavier types of military material, though this additional burden on the Chinese economy must have been rather modest.

All indications point to the fact that the Chinese launched the offensive along the Indian border with strictly limited objectives. Once these objectives were attained, they stopped; perhaps partly because further advances into the Indian subcontinent would have forced them to import much larger scale supplies from China proper, thereby extending and straining supply lines to an extent the Chinese economy is not now equipped to bear.

What do I mean by the economic limitations upon Chinese military power? How serious are the economic difficulties facing the Chinese Communist regime in recent years and what is their background?

Officially, all blame for the current agricultural crisis in China is placed on nature. But it is clear even from the regime's own pronouncements that prolonged neglect – inadequate investment, poor production incentives, perpetual reorganization and disorganization of agrarian institutions, and a host of specific planning errors – was bound to have an effect sooner or later even if the weather had been favorable.

Chinese agriculture has traditionally supplied food to the population, raw materials for food processing and textile industries, and has been the principal bulwark of the country's exports as well. Once the new regime restored order and communications, agricultural production recovered rapidly and had reached its more or less normal level by 1952. Favorable weather conditions helped, particularly in 1952. Using 1952 as a reference year, food crop production increased by 19 to 20 percent between then and 1957, according to official Peking figures. Population expanded by about 12 percent in the same period. Thus, per capita availability of foodstuffs would seem to have grown by 8 percent, or at an average annual rate of about 1.5 percent a year. These official statistics cannot entirely be trusted, however. Their strong upward bias is accounted for in all probability by improvements in crop reporting and the broadening coverage of agricultural statistics between '52 and '57, and most particularly between '52 and the completion of the collectivization process in 1955-56. The per capita supply of food crops may not have increased at all, from 1952 to '57, or only imperceptibly for the country as a whole. At the same time, the export share of food crops and soybeans remained fairly stable, so that no significant change in average per capita availability could be expected on this account.

Why, then, did Chinese Mainland periodicals and newspapers even in this period report food shortages and tight rations, particularly in urban areas? The answer is distribution. According to Chinese data, rural population increased by nine percent and urban by as much as 30 percent between 1952 and 1957. Govern-

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ment purchase and taxation of food crops and soybeans remained more or less the same. Result: a tightening food supply in the cities, which seems confirmed by increasingly stricter rationing regulations, by official figures on levels of per capita food consumption in urban and rural areas, and by reports of continuing difficulties encountered in collecting grain from the countryside. The government's agricultural policies, therefore, have not only failed in the field of production but also in the field of distribution; collectivization, which was designed primarily to fortify official control over farm produce and its disposal, apparently did not bring increases in farm collection; farm consumption seems to have risen while urban consumption declined.

### *Breaking the Bottleneck*

Slow growth or stagnation in agriculture not only affected the food supply but the supply of industrial raw materials too. Take cotton growing. During most of the interwar and postwar years, China was a net importer of raw cotton. The new regime was determined to reverse this trend and make the Chinese mainland self-sufficient in cotton. To this end, it rapidly extended cotton acreage in the first few years until it began to eat seriously into the grain producing area. In the absence of significant increases in grain yields and with the population pressing upon the available food supply, the cotton area was reduced. Then in anticipation of a good grain harvest in 1955, it was again expanded. With the fluctuations in acreage and weather conditions, cotton production fluctuated as well. This in turn led to periodic raw material shortages for the cotton textile industry; in some years it had to operate considerably below capacity.

The regime was forced to face the fact that amidst rapid industrialization and far-reaching changes in farm organization, the agricultural problem was still no nearer to a solution than it had been in 1952. The net result was not only a deterioration in urban food supplies too but a serious threat to the pace of industrial expansion.

It is against the background of these experiences that the regime approached its Second Five Year Plan, the Great Leap Forward, and the year 1958. The leadership had become convinced that an all-out effort based on comprehensive mobilization of labor could break the agricultural bottleneck, that crop yields could be raised by closer planting, deep plowing, more careful weeding, and by ambitious soil and water conservation projects. There was to be far-reaching agricultural reorganization based on communes. The program was to be carried out under local party leadership, based on local initiative, and with the party taking responsibility for statistical reporting. The farm production targets were fixed at a very high level, and maximum pressure was put on the cadres to fulfill and overfulfill the plans. With independent statistical and accounting checks removed, the stage was set for the fantastic claims made in 1958; as the year progressed and with each report of fulfillment or overfulfillment, the targets themselves were raised. The end result was a mutually reinforcing mechanism for producing claims.

The bubble of self-delusion burst in late summer of 1959, when in the face of the approaching harvest and continuing food shortages it became obvious that the '58 and '59 claims and targets were completely removed from reality. Therefore, the figures were revised. But the revised figures are open to serious question as well! The problem is further complicated by the fact that since 1960 the Chinese Communists have stopped the publication of practically all statistics. The last more or less reliable agricultural production figures refer to 1957. 1958 *was* a good harvest year, although this was largely due to weather rather than the new farm measures, many of which turned out to be technically deficient. In contrast, the 1959 crop was poor and agricultural production has been more or less stagnating since around its 1957 level.

Now, if we assume that Chinese population has continued to grow at an average annual rate of two percent, it must have increased altogether by about 10 percent since 1957. The average calorie intake per capita was meager in China even under "normal" conditions – 2,000 to 2,200 calories a day. Even a relatively modest reduction could have a serious effect. Furthermore, since 1957 there was not only a quantitative but a more significant qualitative deterioration in food supply because of the substitution of sweet potatoes and coarse grains for rice and wheat, coupled with a sharp decline in the availability of animal products and protective foods of all kinds.

By virtue of the very poor '60 harvest, food shortages were especially acute in the spring of 1961, though the situation improved after that partly because of a somewhat better harvest and stepped-up imports of grain which mounted to five million tons in 1961-62.

As might be expected, the deteriorating food situation brought with it more nutritional diseases, most widespread in early 1961. In the worst period, even military rations were cut, as a means of assuring a minimal food supply for everyone. We don't know what effect this and other health hazards have had on the death rate. The most we can say is that while the food crisis has been serious there have been no signs of mass famines, in part because the system of transport and distribution proved equal to the task of distributing food rapidly to the hardest hit areas.

In sharp contrast with agriculture, industrial development in Mainland China was unusually rapid during



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the first decade of Communist rule, from 1949 to 1959; and within industry the investment goods branches grew faster than those producing consumer goods. Industrial production expanded at an estimated average annual rate of 21 to 24 percent (depending on whether the measure is confined to factory production alone or to factory and handicraft production combined) between 1949 and 1959, and 13 to 14 percent during the Five Year Plan alone – 1952 to 1957. In the postwar period this record has been approximated or exceeded only by two other Asian countries: both the Japanese and the Pakistani rates are higher than the Chinese for this period, but for all the other combinations of years for which comparable data are available, the Chinese rate either matches or is higher than that of the other two countries. The most notable fact about this comparison is that Soviet industrial performance lagged significantly behind that of China, Japan and Pakistan. This, of course, must in large part be ascribed to the much larger industrial base in present-day Russia as compared to either China or Pakistan, and to the fact that by the fifties the most readily available avenues for rapid growth – based primarily on fuller and better utilization of existing resources – had been pretty much exhausted in the Soviet Union. Still the Chinese rates of the past decade, and even for the 1952 to 1957 period alone, exceed the estimated Soviet rates of industrial growth for 1928 to 1937, that is for the time when Soviet industrial capacity was not much larger than the Mainland Chinese has been in recent years.

In making these comparisons, bear in mind their limitations. China in 1949-59 is not comparable to the Soviet Union of 1928-37. By 1928, the USSR had fully recovered from war devastation and civil war; China was completely prostrate in 1949, and its recovery was completed only in 1952, or from some points of view as late as 1955. Another qualifying factor in such comparisons is the uncertainty about the data: information on Chinese industrial output for 1949-52 and again for 1958-59 is much less reliable than Soviet statistics for 1928-37. A comparison of 1952-57 for China with the prewar Soviet planning era may be more firmly based. For these periods, the differences in rates of growth for the two countries are narrowed considerably. Moreover, the outcome of this two-country comparison would be profoundly altered if we used for China the 1949 to 1961 or 1952 to 1961 period; this would undoubtedly show much lower average rates of growth in view of a marked slowing down of Chinese industrial growth since 1960.

Yet such complications do not mar comparisons of Chinese and *Indian* industrial growth from 1952 to 1957. Both started their first Five Year Plans at roughly comparable stages of development and with industrial establishments that were not too dissimilar in size. Yet Indian industry grew quite slowly, relatively, averaging five to six percent a year, slower than Mexico or any of the more rapidly growing European countries. It is true that this was partly a matter of conscious choice, of assigning higher priority than do the Chinese to agriculture on the one hand and to advance in per capita consumption on the other hand. Nevertheless, with better planning, more careful and

*1957 Production of Certain Industrial Products in Selected Countries*

| Item | Units | China | Japan | India | Soviet Union | Canada | United Kingdom | German Federal Republic | France | Italy | United States | China's World Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coal | million MT | 124.2 | 52.2 | 44.2 | 328.5 | 9.9 | 227.2 | 134.4 | 56.8 | 1.0 | 467.6 | 5 |
| Metallurgical Coke | " | 5.0 | 5.9 | 2.6 | 48.6 | 3.5 | 20.8 | 45.3 | 12.6 | 3.7 | 68.9 | 9 |
| Crude Petroleum | " | 1.5 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 98.3 | 24.6 | 0.1 | 3.9 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 353.6 | 24 |
| Pig Iron | " | 5.9 | 7.1 | 1.9 | 37.0 | 3.6 | 14.5 | 18.5 | 12.0 | 2.2 | 73.4 | 7 |
| Crude Steel | " | 5.3 | 12.6 | 1.7 | 51.2 | 4.6 | 22.0 | 24.5 | 14.1 | 6.8 | 102.2 | 9 |
| Cement | " | 6.9 | 15.2 | 5.7 | 28.9 | 5.6 | 12.1 | 18.8 | 12.7 | 11.9 | 52.6 | 8 |
| Electric Power | billion kwh | 19.3 | 81.3 | 13.7 | 209.7 | 91.0 | 105.6 | 91.7 | 57.4 | 42.7 | 716.3 | 12 |
| Paper (exc. newsprint) | thousand MT | 913.0 | 1,483.0 | 174.0 | 1,749.0 | 769.0 | 1,761.0 | 1,861.0 | 1,251.0 | 724.0 | 11,906.0 | 8 |
| Newsprint | " | 122.0 | 555.0 | 15.0 | 377.0 | 5,771.0 | 663.0 | 270.0 | 427.0 | 181.0 | 1,630.0 | 13 |
| Cotton Yarn | million meters | 844.0 | 517.0 | 807.0 | 1,015.0 | 68.0 | 330.0 | 418.0 | 313.0 | 173.0 | 1,700[a] | 3 |

(a) The exact figure is 1,645.6 and refers to 1958. The 1957 figure is not available.



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efficient resource utilization and allocation, and greater investment of effort, the Indians could have almost certainly done better without upsetting these very basic priorities.

Factory output in China, on the other hand, almost doubled between 1952 and 1957 and almost quadrupled between 1952 and 1959. Individual industries in China have grown at unequal rates, in large part reflecting the planners' sense of priorities. Expansion was fastest in electric power generation, petroleum extraction, metallurgy, engineering and chemicals, in all of which growth was well above the all-industry average. These were the sectors which in relation to the technical requirements of modern industrialization were most underdeveloped and also most directly related to military capability. In contrast, consumer goods industries, including food processing and textiles, grew much more slowly, although at a rate that was well ahead of the pace of population growth. This does not necessarily mean that the per capita supply of these products actually available to the population has risen, or risen at this rate. Particularly so since total exports rose more rapidly than consumer goods manufacture, and these goods constituted an increasing share of exports.

### *High in Cotton, Low in Oil*

Where to rank China on the scale of world industrial power raises some hard and to some extent unanswerable questions. Should this rank be determined on the basis of total production or output per capita? Clearly from a standard of living standpoint the latter criterion is more relevant. However, from a military or political power viewpoint the issue is much less clear.

Looking at the data in the table on page 17, we see that China by the late fifties was undoubtedly among the first 10 industrial powers in the world, although in terms of per capita output it lagged far behind. The year 1957 was selected primarily because the Chinese data for that year are more reliable. However by choosing 1957 as the standard of comparison, China's relative position is understated. Significant increases in industrial production have been attained in the two subsequent years, though this is counterbalanced by the decline in industrial production since 1959 so that today it probably is not substantially above '57 levels.

As might be expected, Mainland China is nearer the top in cotton manufacture (which is closely associated with population size) and lowest in oil extraction since the country is poorly endowed with petroleum resources. It ranks very high as a coal producer, and prior to the onset of economic stagnation in 1960 it was forging rapidly ahead in iron and steel, metallurgical coke, cement and electric power. Here it has left India very much behind, but – with the exception of coal and cotton textiles – China still lags behind Japan and the larger countries in Western Europe. It nowhere approaches the Soviet Union (again with the exception of coal and cotton yarn) and even less the US.

In trying to estimate China's present industrial capabilities, we should not forget the reasons for the stagnation or decline in industrial output since 1960. They can be traced largely to the mounting agricultural troubles. These led to severe raw material shortages for the consumer goods industries (for instance, flour milling, brewing, etc.). Likewise, with the drop in agricultural production and incomes, the regime's capacity to squeeze agriculture was also markedly curtailed. Consequently, the level of savings in the economy was reduced. This, in turn, forced the regime to reduce its level of investment, cutting back its plant expansion which now did not make any sense anyway because plant in place was operating already below capacity. The cutback in investment led to a decline in the demand for investment goods, so that industries such as iron and steel, and machine-building also had to curtail operations. In brief, while the consumers' goods industries suffered from raw material shortages, investment goods branches had a shortage of demand.

What is the bearing of all this on China's ability to support a prolonged war? China outweighs India not only in terms of population, but also in industrial capacity, particularly heavy capacity most directly related to the waging of war. Having said this, let me again call attention to the economic decline in China *since 1960, which has led to a reordering of priorities.* It is more than likely that for the next several years China's planners will be preoccupied with agricultural recovery and development. To the extent that they are successful, industrial expansion may be expected to be resumed once more, but probably at a slower rate than in the past. I would guess that for the next five years at any rate, the Chinese Communists may be compelled to trade some industrial growth for higher rates of agricultural output.

Yet, if China's economic capability to wage a large-scale and extended conflict is likely to be severely limited for some years to come, this does not necessarily apply to local conflicts that do not absorb vast resources and which can be kept within bounds. For small-scale border wars, her industrial superiority may be sufficient.

We return, finally, to the question with which we began – China's conflict with India. Given the absence of Soviet aid to Peking, and the presence of American-British aid to Delhi, it should not be too difficult to tip the economic and military supply power in India's favor, at least until such time as the Chinese regain their industrial growth momentum. And then? A longer-term solution will have to be sought in a marked acceleration of economic growth in India.



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# "Listen Yankee" Revisited

*by Samuel Shapiro*

> "My loyalties are conditional upon my own convictions and my own values. . . . Both of these lie more with the Cuban revolution than with the official United States reaction to it. The policies the United States has pursued and is pursuing against Cuba are based upon a profound ignorance, and are shot through with hysteria. I believe that if they are continued they will result in more disgrace and more disaster for the image of my country before Cuba, before Latin America, and before the world." – C. Wright Mills, *Listen Yankee* (1960)

Despite his successful academic career, C. Wright Mills did not fit the conventional pattern of a professor of sociology at a major American university. For one thing, his work was always intensely committed and personal; he shied away from foundation grants and association with research organizations that turn out studies of public opinion, marketing research, and similar directly useful subjects. For another, he was not content to mark out a small area within his discipline and spend his life mapping its boundaries and filling in details. And, finally, he never accepted the pleasing image of a righteous, prosperous, and conflict-free America that was a product of full employment in the academic profession during the 1950's. Instead, as the years went by and the Cold War continued, Mills grew more irreverent, more alienated, and more critical of the faults he saw in American society.

Mills' boldness, his concern for big problems and pivotal situations, and his willingness to take intellectual risks are all evident in *Listen Yankee*, the shortest and next to last of the eleven books he wrote or edited. As his critics were quick to point out, he lacked most of the usual qualifications requisite for writing about the Cuban revolution. He had visited Latin America only briefly, in 1959 and 1960, knew little about the area's history or social structure, and had never visited Cuba before his brief tour in the summer of 1960. He did not speak Spanish, and allowed himself to be guided about the island by partisans of the revolution; he did not interview or obtain information from any *guajiros* (peasants) or workers, from opponents of Fidel, or from members of the PSP (Communist) hierarchy who were rising to key posts at the time of his arrival in Havana.

*Listen Yankee*, therefore, was not a cool and careful sociological study, but a polemic along the lines of *Common Sense* or *J'accuse*, an unusual and passionate statement to have come from an academician. Despite Mills' explanation that for the most part he was serving only as a spokesman for the revolutionaries, for "the hungry nation bloc [as] a voice that must be heard" by the American public, his book was pretty generally dismissed as a piece of *fidelista* propaganda:

> "Mills is dishing out . . . the official Castro line; and . . . he expounds it with a mixture of bluster, revolutionary rhetoric, and downright falsehood which could not be improved on by Fidel himself" – Charles Rolo, *The Atlantic*, February, 1961.

> "The book is . . . naïve in the extreme . . . or . . . purposefully designed to create a false impression about the . . . current situation in Cuba." – Kevin Corrigan, *Catholic World*, March, 1961.

> "Tedious and repetitious, the book reads like translations of Castro's interminable and paranoiac brainwashing tirades against the United States. It is replete with all the distortions and untruths . . . that have been printed in the Communist Party press for more than twenty-five years. . . . With absolutely no attempt at objectivity, Mills parrots these absurd accusations." – Jules Dubois, *The Saturday Review*, December 17, 1960.

When *Harper's* published a chapter (December, 1960), its editors were careful to label it "a piece of propaganda – uncritical, emotional, oblivious of the faults of the Castro regime." Even periodicals like *Dissent* and *Encounter* were hostile to the argument of *Listen Yankee;* as Mills put it, in the last letter he wrote to me, "I expected to be beat on the head by the mass media, but I did not expect that the *entire* intelligentsia of this country would reveal so fully their moral cowardice."

Reading the book over again today, with the perspective derived from two more years' development of the Cuban revolution, it is possible to see that Mills *was* sometimes led astray by his informants, or at least did repeat inaccurate things which they told him. Since his book had such an extraordinary circulation (hundreds of thousands of copies in this country, 100,000 more in four editions in an authorized translation issued in Mexico, and at least one counterfeit edition published in Peru – all most unusual for a serious book about Latin America), it is worth pointing out some of the errors of fact which Mills did not correct or criticize:

*Listen, Yankee:*
*The middle classes "failed completely to do anything real about the Batista tyranny."*

Comment:
This is unfair to the thousands of middle-class Cubans who risked their lives in clandestine work in the cities, to such middle-class martyrs as José Antonio Echevarría, who led the attack on the Presidential Palace in 1957, to the 170 middle-class youths who took



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part in the assault on the Moncada barracks. Castro himself is of middle-class origin, the son of a well-to-do Oriente landlord, married for a time to the sister of a Batista official.

*What did you [Yankees] do – about the weapons, for example, the Yankee Government kept sending . . . to Batista?*

US arms shipments to Cuba, totaling less than $11 million between 1945 and 1958, were doubtless an error. But these shipments were halted in March, 1958.

*Medical doctors are with and for the revolution.*

The Cuban Emergency Relief Center in Miami estimates that 1,300 of Cuba's 5,000 MD's had left the island by the end of 1961, and more continue to arrive in Miami every week.

*"We are already [August, 1960] beyond the point where [American economic pressure] could hurt us in any real way."*

On my most recent visit to Cuba, in August, 1962, the loss of $600 million in imports from the US was painfully apparent; there were severe shortages of food and every kind of consumer goods. It is not at all clear if a viable economy can be built up relying on markets and sources of supply that are 10,000 miles away.

*The Soviet countries are buying sugar. And that is because their standard of living is increasing. There is thus a rational economic relation between these Soviet countries and countries such as Cuba. . . . The greater demand in the world market will increase the price of sugar.*

Ernesto Guevara himself has pointed out that the USSR produces enough (beet) sugar of its own, and that it would be cheaper for the Russians to increase production at home rather than rely on Cuba's antiquated and inefficient industry. And despite a disastrous 1962 Cuban crop of only 4.8 million tons (which was exceeded as far back as 1925), the world price of sugar has been hovering at about 3 cents a pound all year.

*Ours is the first agrarian reform in the world which began right away with an increased production. . . . For the first time in the history of Cuba, the rural population is going to have plenty of good clean chicken to eat at a price they can afford. . . . By December, 1960, we figure we'll have about 60 (state) farms, producing some 6 million chickens a month; in 1961, we'll double that.*

INRA's figures, like those issued by the Chinese during their Great Leap Forward, are quite unreliable. There has been some increase in production of food in items like rice and beans. But the agrarian reform has so far been unable to make up for the $180 million in food normally imported from the US. Rice, beans, fish, eggs, meat, milk, butter, and most other foods are tightly rationed. As for chickens, Cubans are entitled to only one a month, and don't always get it. Castro's most recent statement is that Cuba is producing only 2 million chickens a month, "and will double that in 1963." – Speech to the Federation of Cuban Women, *El Mundo*, October 3, 1962.

*"Next year – 1961 – we are going to have a one million ton steel plant."*

No such plant is currently in operation, or even under construction. Even Professor J. P. Morray, an enthusiastic defender of the regime, estimates that steel production will be only 250,000 tons in 1965. – "Cuba and Communism," *Monthly Review*, July-August 1961.

*Our Prime Minister went to Washington right after the insurrection, but he was just given the cold shoulder, and certainly no help. Even his request for quite minor financial consideration was turned down flat.*

This bit of *fidelista* mythology has been refuted by Felipe Pazos, Castro's first National Bank President, and by Rufo Lopez Fresquet, his Minister of Finance. They accompanied Fidel to the US in 1959, and have reported their surprise and disappointment when he specifically ordered them not to ask for American help. – Daniel James, *Cuba: The First Soviet Satellite in the Americas* (New York, 1961)

*We Cuban revolutionaries of the 26th of July Movement are much more advanced than the Communist Party ever was or is today. . . . We are using them rather than the reverse. . . . The Communists as a political party have very little importance in Cuba.*

Even in the summer of 1960, when Mills visited Cuba, PSP (Communist) influence was considerable and growing. By 1962, INRA, Havana University, the trade union federation (CTC-

# *Another Dream Song*

Filling her compact and delicious body
with chicken páprika, she glanced at me
twice.
Fainting with interest, I hungered back
and only the fact of her husband and four other people
kept me from springing on her

or falling at her little feet and crying
"You are the hottest one for years of night
Henry's dazed eyes
have enjoyed, Brilliance." I advanced upon
(despairing) my spumoni. – Sir Bones: is stuffed,
de world, wif feeding girls.

– Black hair, complexion latin, jewelled eyes
downcast . . . The slob beside her feasts . . . What wonders is
she sitting on, over there?
The restaurant buzzes. She might as well be on Mars.
Where did it all go wrong? There ought to be a law against Henry.
– Mr. Bones: there is.

John Berryman



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R), the only legal political party, and the largest newspaper were all headed by "old militants," and the Union of Young Communists (UJC) had clearly become the road to future influence.

> *"We Cubans aren't afraid of any idea; so we are going to be really free. . . . We believe that minorities should have the means of expressing their opinions."*

Cuban newspapers, the university, the schools, the publishing business, and all the organs of intellectual life are anything but "really free" at the present time. Miils' informant could argue that it is American pressure that has led to the clamping-down on free discussion.

*Listen Yankee* says nothing about Castro's promise to restore the 1940 constitution, his pledge of "genuine representative government" and "truly honest elections," his guarantee of "just compensation of expropriated owners" of land to be turned over to small holders. Theodore Draper, Castro's ablest American critic, has shown quite clearly (in *Castro's Revolution: Myths and Realities*) that *el líder máximo* promised one kind of revolution, and delivered quite another.

*Listen Yankee* might seem, therefore, to have only the limited value of telling us what Cuban revolutionaries were thinking and saying in the summer of 1960. Even Draper admits that it is a "peculiarly useful and exasperating work" on this score, so faithful a record that he was able to guess at the names of many of Mills' informants.

> "Catching superbly the color, flavor, and intensity of the revolutionary thinking and emotion, [Mills] has presented with fine accuracy what Castro and his friends think and what makes them act the way they have been acting toward the United States. . . . The author has been eminently successful in putting across this 'voice of the Cuban revolution'." – Tad Szulc in *The New York Times*, December 4, 1960.

But if the book were no more than an honest and intelligent piece of journalism, it could be regarded as only an interesting but unimportant footnote to Mills' scholarly career.

The basic argument of *Listen Yankee*, however, like the Cuban revolution itself, cannot be dismissed so easily. Despite errors of fact that were doubtless inevitable in a book produced in such haste, Mills also noted down a great many truths about the revolution, truths which the American people and their leaders have not been able to bring themselves to recognize even yet. On re-reading the book in Cuba during the summer of 1962, I was surprised to see that much of what Mills wrote still seemed applicable, even after two years of continuing cataclysmic change. To compensate for the brevity of Mills' Latin American experience, he had the advantages of a gifted observer's eye, an understanding of the process of social change, a familiarity with radical thought, and a sympathetic sociological imagination to help him interpret the revolution. He made many errors, but on a number of crucial issues he was right, and far more experienced Latin American scholars and journalists wrong; and it is important for us to understand why.

To begin with, Mills made the most of the weeks he spent in Cuba. Before arriving in Havana he read everything he could on the island's recent history, including US Commerce Department reports on sugar and the International Bank for Reconstruction's surveys of the economy. While his contacts were limited to middle-class intellectuals, he did travel from one end of the island to the other, and interviewed many of the men who are still running the revolution: President Osvaldo Dórticos, Education Minister Armando Hart, Ernesto Guevara, then head of the National Bank and now Minister of Industry, Carlos Franqui, editor of *Revolución*, Major René Vallejo, INRA chief of Oriente province, and others. And he knew how to make the most of these meetings. Robert Taber, himself an experienced reporter formerly with NBC, wrote me last July that Mills

> ". . . was the most thorough, penetrating, and all-round best interviewer I've ever seen, including any journalist you'd care to mention, and most psychiatrists. . . . When he got through, subject and he were both wrung dry, he because of remarkably intense concentration, watching subject like a hawk for every expression. In the end he knew a lot more about the subject than the subject did, of that I'm sure. It was a pleasure and wonder to watch him work."

Putting together what he was told and what he saw, Mills concluded that the revolution had accomplished many needed reforms, that it was popular with a majority of the Cuban people, and that it was permanent, *i.e.*, could not be destroyed by outside pressures. In view of the subsequent unsuccessful invasion of the island by a US-backed group of Cuban exiles, it is clear that President Kennedy would have done well to listen to Mills' informants:

> "Your government is dreaming of some kind of indirect military action, secretly supported mercenaries and Batista henchmen; something like they did in Guatemala a while back. . . . But the ending isn't going to be the same, we can assure you of that. It won't work again. . . . We will not flee the country as Batista did. We are determined to fight to the end. Any one who is here in Cuba for just a little while sees clearly that this is just a fact."

This was in print while American newspapers prated about Castro's "hysterical" talk of an invasion, and even before Professor Ronald Hilton of Stanford University revealed the existence of an American base at Retalhuleu in Guatemala. On the danger of an invasion and its probable failure, Mills was correctly informed, and the mass media, the CIA, the joint Chiefs of Staff, and the President of the United States were not. Plenty of Latin American experts, with vastly more knowledge of Cuban affairs than Mills, insisted, and still insist, that Castro can be overthrown and the old pattern of American domination of the island resumed.

> "I have the feeling that economic pressures will make Fidel Castro unpopular in the long run. . . . When things hit bottom, the United States will lend $500 million to a new Cuban Government on the pledge that the confiscated properties will be returned or the former owners indemnified. American capital will reenter Cuba." – Daniel M. Frieden-



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berg, "History Will Not Absolve Castro," *The New Republic*, October 10, 1960.

"To remain in power, Castro will have to massacre most of the country's 6.5 million people." – Jules Dubois, *The Pontiac Press*, November 11, 1961.

People who write this way, as Mills pointed out, simply do not understand revolutions. We can, as Senator Engle of California has engagingly suggested, "take the top six feet off of all of Cuba with one air strike, and all that's built on it, and all that live on it." But we cannot reverse a social revolution and restore the old order of things in Cuba.

Another theme of *Listen Yankee* was Mills' insistence on Castro's humanitarian goals and achievements. On my own visits to the island in 1960, 1960-61, and 1962, I saw continuing evidence of concern for the immediate welfare and future well-being of what had formerly been the despised lower classes. Indeed, the Communist technicians from Eastern Europe I interviewed in Cuba usually criticized the regime because it was too easy-going, too consumption-oriented, too committed to such "impractical" projects as housing, hotels, and tourism – "not enough work and too much cha-cha-cha."

No one can deny that the press in Cuba today is muzzled, that the trade unions are becoming organs of the state for enforcing production goals, and that grave injustices have been and are being committed by a small group of men with absolute power. Nevertheless, the positive social accomplishments of the past four years have won continuing support for Castro from what I believe is still a substantial majority of the Cuban people. It would be easy but meaningless to present testimony to that effect by such uncritical eulogists of the regime as Leo Huberman, Paul Sweezey, and Professor Morray. But consider the following observations, all of them supporting Mills' view, and all of them written by men whose attitude toward Castro ranges from mildly critical to bitterly hostile:

1960

"No matter what one may think of the theory behind Cuba's land-reform program and no matter how the program turns out in practice, there is no getting around the fact that for the poor, illiterate, landless, outcast guajiros, the cooperatives represent a jump of centuries in living standards. They also represent a vast increase of constructive activity in the rural areas that were formerly the most backward and stagnant part of Cuba. . . . For the first time in Cuban history a leader has given [the peasants] a sense of human dignity and political importance, and they have paid him back by revering him." – Theodore Draper, "The Runaway Revolution," *The Reporter*, May 12, 1960.

"I'm one hundred percent better. Before, there was not work. Now there's work all year. Now we are eating – rice, eggs, beans. . . . If this is Communism, let it come." – An unidentified cooperative farmer in Pinar del Rio, quoted in *Time*, June 20, 1960.

"Seven thousand new school classrooms have been completed this year. . . . Uncounted millions have been spent on the building of public beaches and tourist facilities – a pet project of Dr. Castro – leading even some of the Premier's most devoted followers to wonder about his system of revolutionary priorities." – Tad Szulc, *The New York Times*, August 3, 1960.

"No less than 86 percent of our sample did approve of the present situation in Cuba and . . . one half of these . . . revealed themselves as really fervent supporters of the present government. . . . We feel reasonably confident in predicting that, had a national election been held at the time of our survey, Fidel Castro would have won by overwhelming odds." – Lloyd A. Free, *Attitudes of the Cuban People Toward the Castro Regime* (Princeton, 1961).

"The story of the transformation of Cuba from a friendly ally to a Communist base is – in large measure – the story of a government in Washington which lacked the imagination and compassion to understand the needs of the Cuban people." – Senator John F. Kennedy, in a speech of October 6, 1960, reprinted in *In-*

## *Enrico's Brother*

Enrico's brother married a strange lady,
the Earth, no other bride he needed; she labored,
brought forth fine sapling children; he laughed at times
and offered firm red apples to his friends:
"My grandchild this," he'd say, "this saucy redhead;
or this blond fellow with the pointed head,"
pointing a pear.

Enrico's brother's heart
tired suddenly one sunny morning
as he was sawing for his winter reading.

They gave him a harp. He had never favored the harp
and played it awkwardly. They taught him songs
and this was more to his liking. He was maker of songs
in his Earth-love days.

But after a million years
of tingling the harp and singing and singing the songs
and watching the myriad myriad newcomers come,
Enrico's brother sought and asked the officials:
"How are my children in that lovely place?"
The officials were friendly enough, they studied the charts;
at last and slowly they turned their haloed heads
and spoke as one: "It seems to be gone," they said.

JOHN RUSSELL MCCARTHY



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*ter-American Economics Affairs,* Winter, 1961.

1961

"The agrarian reform program, the heart of the original revolution, is, to use the most reticent adjective, a splendid piece of work . . . undoubtedly a success in the improvement of people as well as of statistics. . . . What is most impressive . . . is the change made by the revolution in people's attitude to life." – "Cuba in Mid-Revolution," *The Economist* (London), January 7, 1961.

"The Fidelist government does have achievements to point to. In the course of a short two years it has built thousands of first-rate schools; it has led an intense (and remarkably successful) campaign to eradicate illiteracy; it has constructed rural settlements which, for the first time, offer modern, sane and even comfortable housing to a growing number of its *cooperativistas.* . . . A strong majority of the rural population still seems willing to follow Castro's lead." – F. R. Alleman, *Forum Service,* February 11, 1961.

"Castro and Guevara are literally adored . . . by the large number of poor and humiliated Cubans, especially the Negroes. They see these two leaders as saintly and honorable men, dedicated to removing injustices and discrimination, to which the Cuban Negroes had been subjected." – Joseph Newman, *The New York Herald Tribune,* March 23, 1961.

"If Castro has enough time and money to create a higher standard of living among the peasants as a result of this truly revolutionary [land reform program] he will go down in Cuban history as a greater patriot than José Martí. . . . Not merely for propaganda purposes . . . but because it is deeply and sincerely believed, the Cuban regime emphasizes that justice and dignity are for the poor and small and colored as well as the rich and big and white. . . . Almost all the peasants still support Castro, as do the very poor and the Negroes in the city population. The intellectuals are without doubt in his camp." – Daniel M. Friedenberg, "A Journey to Cuba," *Dissent,* Summer, 1961.

"The concrete cubes of peasant houses, with electricity and running water, are replacing the former squalor of palm leaf thatched huts. . . . Living standards are rising and unemployment is dwindling." – Tad Szulc, *The New York Times,* June 25, 1961.

1962

"The explanations offered for Castro's failure to hold elections are on the whole reasonable. The Revolution has been unquestionably popular with a large majority of the Cuban people, and few revolutionary governments . . . have held elections until considerable time elapsed after they came to power." – Dennis H. Wrong, "The American Left and Cuba," *Commentary,* February, 1962.

"Though greatly diminished, the reservoir of idealism and expectancy that Castro began with still exists among many *campesinos.*" – *Time,* April 27, 1962.

"Cubans partial to the revolution . . . take pride in modern housing developments that have sprung up, mainly on palm-dotted fields but also around several cities. In Havana . . . they will point at the East Havana suburb, with its up-to-date apartment buildings etched on the bright horizon. Rolling through the countryside, one sees acres of small concrete-and-brick homes, designed to replace miserable huts." – AP dispatches printed in *The New York Times,* June 10 and June 13, 1962.

"The eradication of prostitution and gambling (much of it controlled by US gangsters), the quick social reforms – these made a deep impression on all those in Latin America who had been hoping for progress in their own countries. . . . Castroism still represents a formidable rallying point for Latin America's destitute masses." – George N. Fenin, "Democracy's Last Chance in Latin America," *The Saturday Review,* August 18, 1962.

"Low cost modern housing, replacing wretched slums, has benefited


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thousands of Cuban families. So has the health program. Clinics have been established throughout the countryside, and medicine has reached some remote areas for the first time. . . . Giant strides have also been made in education. . . . More Cubans are eating more regularly than was true in pre-Castro days. No report on Cuba pretending to a reasonable degree of objectivity can avoid the judgment that Castro's regime has achieved significant gains for its people in the realm of social service." – Donald Grant, "Castro's Cuba Today," *The Progressive*, September, 1962.

These reports, and others like them, should not of course lead us to any blanket endorsement of a totalitarian regime; similar stories regularly came out of Mussolini's Italy, Stalin's Russia, and Hitler's Germany. Castro's dictatorship could become a brutal tyranny. Mills himself was aware of this, and frank in expressing his fears:

"I do not like such dependence upon one man as exists in Cuba today, nor the virtually absolute power that this one man possesses . . . . Any moment of such military and economic truth *might* become an epoch of political and cultural lies. It *might* harden into any one of several kinds of dictatorial tyranny."

But the United States, Mills argued, could only exacerbate the problem and drive Fidel to tyranny by continuing its hostile attitude toward his regime. Repeated statements by American officials that "Communism in this hemisphere is not negotiable" (Adlai Stevenson), and that "we do not recognize the Castro regime in Cuba, and never will" (Douglas Dillon), are fine for home consumption, but hardly the basis for a viable Caribbean policy. With the Alliance for Progress so far an admitted failure, *fidelismo* is still what Mills said it was," a major alternative to . . . misery elsewhere in Latin America."

The intellectuals in President Kennedy's entourage have tried to brush aside Mills' assertion (in *The Power Elite* and *The Causes of World War III*) that a small group of men with vested interests controlled American domestic and foreign policy, and that they based their rule on "violence and . . . inept opportunism." But it remains for them to explain why the Cuban policy pursued during the last two years of the Eisenhower Administration and the first two years of the New Frontier fell into such a monolithic pattern. Eisenhower cut off the Cuban sugar quota; Kennedy shut off the last trickle of trade. Eisenhower broke relations; Kennedy kept our embassy in Havana shut. Eisenhower authorized the training of a band of anti-Castro refugees by the CIA; Kennedy sent them ashore in the Bay of Pigs. The faces (except for the ever-present head of the FBI) change. Eisenhower, the Dulles brothers, and Sherman Adams are replaced by the Kennedys, McCone, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and McGeorge Bundy. But our Cuban policy remains the same. This would be understandable, perhaps, if that policy were successful. But our hostility has so far succeeded only in driving Fidel further into the Soviet camp; his first official announcement that his was a "Socialist" revolution came immediately after our tragi-comic invasion of April, 1961. As Mills warned, State Department and CIA policymakers have brought about what they most feared – the intrusion of Russian Communism in the Caribbean.

Mills' basic conclusions about Castro, then, have not yet been proved wrong. He felt also that the inadequate American reaction to *fidelismo* was symptomatic, that "on the shores of Cuba the whole international posture of the United States of America has . . . collapsed in utter failure." Even before Kennedy's election Mills predicted the attempted invasion, the unsuccessful Alianza, and the inability of the new Administration to deviate in any essential way from the policies of the old in Latin America: "You're coming up against the economic and political structure of the United States."

Re-read in this light, *Listen Yankee* fits into Mills' thought as a significant part of its structure. Here, he believed, was a possible escape from the sterile formulas of the past, from the warfare between impotent liberalism and vulgarized Marxism. The Cuban revolution, he thought, was a new and independent movement, with a great deal of promise in opening a new road to socialism, one free of the dogmatism and sectarianism of orthodox Communist movements elsewhere. During the last year of his life he hoped to return to Cuba to see how the revolution was progressing, and perhaps to begin a broadly based study of what he regarded as one of the most promising social experiments of the 1960's. And it was fitting that his last book, devoted to a consideration of the varieties of Marxism, should have concluded with Ernesto Guevara's "Notes for the Study of the Ideology of the Cuban Revolution." I can similarly end with some of the advice that Mills hoped we would listen to before it was too late:

"No matter what you believe about Communism, there is only one way you can counter it. You must begin really to compete with that influence in positive, constructive ways. And that can only mean in technical and cultural and economic and political ways. If you really tried, perhaps you might win . . . . Cuba is your big chance. It's your chance to establish once again what the United States perhaps did once mean to the world. It's your chance to make it clear how you're going to respond to all the chaos and tumult and glory, all the revolution and bloody mess and enormous hopes that are coming about among all the impoverished, disease-ridden, illiterate, hungry peoples of the world in which you, Yankee, are getting so fat and drowsy."

## Notes on Contributors

Samuel Shapiro, *the author of numerous controversial articles about US policy in Latin America, has just lost his job as an assistant professor of American history at Michigan State University.* The Detroit Free Press *charges that the issue of academic freedom was raised by his dismissal, and students have set up a committee for his reinstatement. Dr. Shapiro's article is drawn from a forthcoming volume:* The New Sociology: Essays on Social Theory and Social Values in Honor of C. Wright Mills, *edited by Irving L. Horowitz.* John Berryman, *a member of the English faculty at Brown University, has published several books of poems.* John Russell McCarthy, *a California poet, makes his first* New Republic *appearance with this issue.*



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## THEATER

# *Candide Among the Culture-Vultures*

*The Beauty Part* is an animated cartoon, with satirical shadings, about the American culture industry. It lacks form, focus, or consistent intention – but it is immensely amusing, and there are enough teeth left in its mouth, after the inevitable out-of-town extractions, to provide some bite as well. Patterning his action on Voltaire's *Candide*, S. J. Perelman traces the picaresque adven-

*The Beauty Part*
by S. J. Perelman (Music Box)
*The Days and Nights of Beebee Fenstermaker*
by William Snyder (Sheridan Square)
*The Coach With the Six Insides*
by Jean Erdman (Village South)
*The Pinter Plays*
by Harold Pinter (Cherry Lane)

tures of a young Park Avenue idealist named Lance Weatherwax, heir of the Weatherwax All-Weather Handy Garbage Disposal fortune. His mind poisoned by art appreciation courses, his heart aflame for a loose-living Bohemian decorator named April Monkhood, Lance has determined to repudiate his inheritance, and give up his life to Art, convinced that the world of culture is the best of all possible worlds.

To disabuse his hero of this fantastic notion, Perelman shows Lance that culture is the biggest sell of all, mainly by introducing him to a venal gallery of opportunistic art-mongers and ostentatious culture-vultures. These include an Action painter who sells out to Hollywood for a percentage of the gross; a vulgar housewife anxious to buy an asbestos painting ("Who cares about the subject matter, so long as it doesn't clash with the drapes") to beautify her free-floating fireplace; a couple of sensationalist Civil War novelists, one of whom is writing about "the Confederacy as seen through the eyes of a Creole call-girl"; a TV gamester and book publisher of Charnel-House, interested primarily in lecture tours and movie sales; and a sculptress who creates portrait busts out of Castille soap on a Proctor and Gamble fellowship.

These and others are enough to persuade Lance that the cultural explosion is detonated by the hand of commerce; and after serving his apprenticeship in painting, writing, moviemaking, and advertising, he is finally reunited with his now sadly sullied Cunegonde. April has been reduced to entertaining at male conventions; and when she is arrested for "conspiring to come out of a cake and dance with a gorilla," Lance can save her honor only by bribing a corrupt judge. Convinced at last that "the things that matter are the things we can touch," Lance decides to let the foundations arbitrate truth and beauty; he will marry April and cultivate his garden of scratch. The first crop is tenderly displayed by Lance's father, who enters stroking a baby's basinette, then throws its contents into the orchestra – a sheaf of dollar bills.

The cheerful materialism of this conclusion, though designed to please, will probably find as little favor with the Broadway audience as Mr. Perelman's jaundiced look at its cultural pretensions; and I suspect that the author's personal basinette would have grown fuller had he chosen a less naked approach to his subject. The middle-class spectator, whatever his private affections, does not usually like to see money stroked in public; and whatever his actual behavior, he still prefers a few gestures in the direction of integrity. Perelman's cynicism, however, is a wholesome antidote to the usual theatrical hypocrisy; and *The Beauty Part*, like Felicien Marceau's *The Egg* (which it resembles in many ways), manages to give us a refreshing glimpse into the hidden motives behind our canting ideals.

Other sources of refreshment include a number of farcical interludes which recall the halcyon days of the Marx Brothers; an expert cast performing, under Noel Willman's aptly two-dimensional direction, in a variety of doubled roles (Charlotte Rae, Alice Ghostly, and Larry Hagman are especially fine); and, of course, the splendidly diversified talents of Bert Lahr. Lahr has a little difficulty wrapping his lips around Perelman's highly verbal wit, but no matter – the play permits him a broad range of comic characterizations. These include Lance's satyromanic father, sputtering with outraged gentility as he explains to his wife a high-pitched offstage scream ("Really Octavia, I just had to give our French maid a severe dressing down"); Hyacinth Beddoes Laffoon, a lecherous woman publisher of horror magazines exulting in her power over male editors; Harry Hubris, the Hollywood producer of a musical on the life of John Singer Sargent; Nelson Smedley, of Smedley Snacketerias, who keeps his palsied hand on a direct line to the John Birch society; and Judge Herman J. Rinderbrust, who tries cases on TV, his verdicts influenced by the sponsors, the ratings, and the secondary mammaries of his female defendants.

Most of these characters and situations are burlesque standards – some even appeared recently in that more compromised work, *Little Me*, executed with less success by Sid Caesar. What Perelman adds to the familiar brew is his linguistic flair (compounded of elaborate circumlocutions and Yiddishisms), generous topical references, and sardonic comment. It is the sharpness of the satirical tone which seems new in Perelman, whose writings have always struck me as rather mild-mannered; and there are indications that, seasoned by the affectation and meretriciousness of our age, his cup of bitterness is beginning to spill over. Still, the author is recruiting his audience from the very community he would excoriate; and for this reason, perhaps, his moral position is indecisive, vacillating between ridicule and celebration of the audience's assumed values (the ending, for example, with its half-

"AS THE LEARNED *astronomers unravel the ciphers radioed from space they may find they know more about Venus than they do about their wives. But whether in science or art or love man cannot flee the irony of his condition; and so let us proceed with this science, and welcome the clarification of those cabalistic radiograms from the abyssal distances: 21, 5'6", 125, 35-24-36. . . .*"

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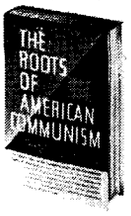


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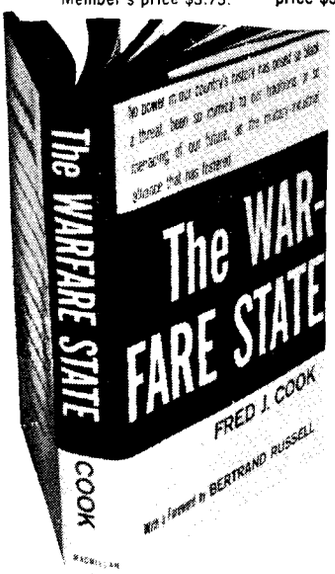


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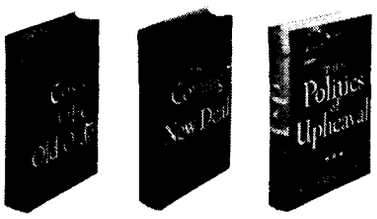


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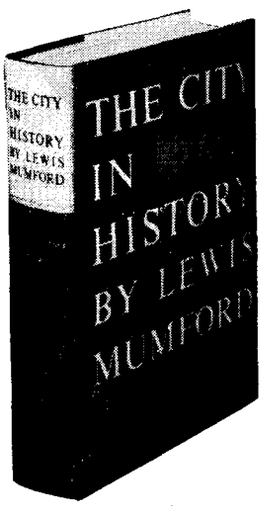


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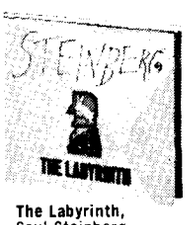


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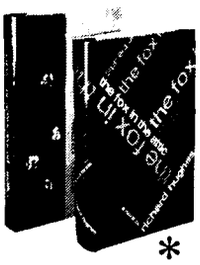


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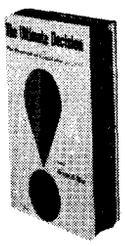

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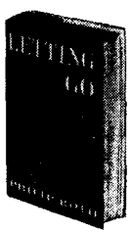

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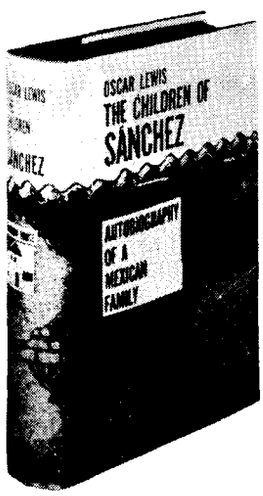


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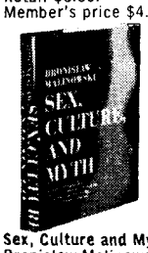


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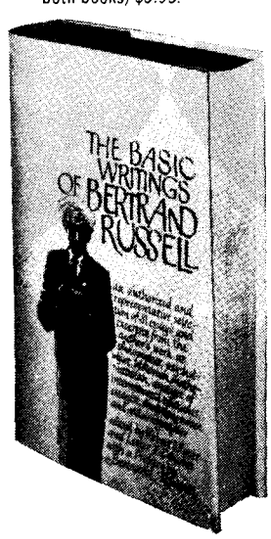


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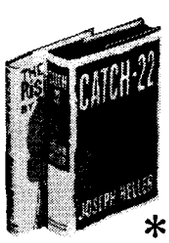


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ironic, half-serious testimonies to money, is particularly ambiguous). Perelman has the capacity to become a very good stage satirist, but like so many writers in his dilemma, he must first be willing to accept an embattled role. One does not war on the cultural pretenders and their publicists by joining ranks with the erstwhile Philistines who now buy their goods.

I have been rather neglecting off-Broadway, but then I feel neglected too: most of its work this season has been dismally undistinguished. Three productions, however, merit brief comments. First, *The Days and Nights of Beebee Fenstermaker*, a first play by William Snyder about a hopeful young girl from the provinces who grows desperate and disillusioned in the city – often tedious and full of structural flaws, but emotionally honest, beautifully acted, and very firmly directed by Ulu Grosbard. Second, *The Coach with the Six Insides*, a dance-and-dialogue adaptation of *Finnegans Wake* by Jean Erdman – artsy-craftsy in a Sarah Lawrence kind of way, and imperfectly performed by an erratic cast, which somehow gradually engrosses you until it finally emerges as an impressive appreciation and interpretation of Joyce's study of night. And third, *The Pinter Plays*, consisting of *The Dumbwaiter* and *The Collection*. Neither of these brief works increases my respect for this author who is apparently working an inexhaustible vein of barren material. Like Albee, Pinter has no subject, and, like Albee, he tries to compensate through a pyrotechnical exhibition of theatrical fizgigs. Still, Pinter consciously imposes his own limitations, and his ability to create an atmosphere of dread and suspense is not to be undervalued. *The Dumbwaiter*, a vaudeville skit with a trick ending about two gunmen in an abandoned restaurant, being besieged by orders for food while awaiting their unknown victim, is marred by a weak production; but *The Collection*, though it finally works itself into a dark corner, is a brittle and scary study of sexual relationships. This work features a romantic quadrangle, composed of a husband, a wife, and two homosexuals, motivated by an infidelity which may or may not have occurred. Two people know for sure, but they won't talk, and as the author withdraws into Pirandellian mystification, the curtain falls on the wife's Mona Lisa smile. Alan Schneider directed this one, unlike the curtain raiser, with just the right amount of harrowing detail. ROBERT BRUSTEIN

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## FILMS

# When Greek Meets Greek

The question of adaptation recently discussed here now broadens out from a matter of form, purely, to include style. This season has brought us two Greek films adapted from classic plays, *Antigone* (*NR*, September 17) and now

*Electra* (Lopert)
*Arturo's Island* (M-G-M)

*Electra*. The second is the more successful because Michael Cacoyannis, its director, is more aware of its inappropriateness. He would, of course, state it differently, perhaps would say that he has put old wine in a new bottle. In fact he did say: "It is based only in the broadest sense on Euripides but it is not a modern-dress version. . . . It is classic in the fullest sense . . ." This last is not only impossible, Cacoyannis fully demonstrates its impossibility. Although the script may only be based on Euripides, it tries to traffic in the same tremendous passions. The play was designed for performance (in masks) to an audience of many thousands, some of whom were a hundred yards away, to be declaimed to music with formal movement, with its cast always seen at one fixed, great distance; the film is seen in distances varying from long-shot to close-up, with mixed movements and rhythms and the camera's motion added, with photography insisting on the realism of the individual rather than his symbolic reality. Texture is drastically altered; the chorus – which, besides its dance and dramatic aspects, was a kind of amplifying system for the back rows – becomes merely a nuisance; and the gods, whose appearance was fitting in the abstraction of the theater and necessary to the themes anywhere, are eliminated as *ex machina*.

In making *Antigone* George Tzavellas clung fairly closely to the original of Sophocles and achieved sincere stiltedness. Cacoyannis, a more talented film director, has foreseen this pitfall and has tried to "lick" Euripides. He has slimmed down the dialogue (although he adds some reviling of her mother's body by Electra) and has beefed up the physical movement wherever possible – even to the point of taking us into the peasant's house with Clytemnestra. (Euripides was a daring innovator but he would have been horrified by that.) Cacoyannis attempts to preserve style by using attitudes and stately groupings derived from Greek bas-reliefs and urns, but the more he tries, the more it looks like pretty posing, too studied and statuesque for the busybody camera. Some arts and styles – ballet, opera, classic theater – were designed to exist at a remove from the audience, in conventions too large for intimacy.

Walter Lassally, the cameraman of *A Taste of Honey* and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*, makes a



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considerable journey eastward and back in time to photograph *Electra* in steely sun and muted shadows, and gives us the austerity of the Greek landscape. (Some of the scenes in palaces and temples seem queer. These buildings weren't ancient at the time; they must have looked new.) Irene Papas, distinguished and smoldering, does her best to sustain a high Handelian line as Electra, as she tried in Antigone, but is cramped and harried by the form itself. However, some moments, like the recognition of Orestes (Yannis Fertis), strike home.

None of this is to argue that the film form is incapable of tragedy or to say that the film will necessarily always be inferior to the great Greek theater. It is only to note – in formal and stylistic comparison – that *Electra* on film is basically as incongruous as Antonioni on stage. One can understand that a Greek film director has been tempted by his nation's heritage as the English have been tempted by Shakespeare. From *Henry V* we remember most vividly the flight of the arrows and the charge of the horses at Agincourt, from *Electra* the stony, shadowed mountains – not Shakespeare or Euripides. *Some Like It Hot* is better, as film, than either.

*Arturo's Island*, an Italian picture adapted from Elsa Morante's novel, is doomed to adjectives like "poetic" and "tender." Any picture that deals with a sensitive adolescent's discovery of love and sex cannot escape the terms, particularly if his first experience is with a ravenous sensual woman, whom he doesn't like, because he cannot have the one he loves. The story takes place on Procida, near Ischia, where Arturo lives with a caretaker in a house willed to his father by a wealthy woman-hater. The father, a handsome German widower, goes off on long mysterious trips and, on one return, brings back a 17-year-old bride; then he soon leaves her and his son for another long, unexplained absence. The bride bears a child, and Arturo, almost *in loco parentis*, falls in love with his young step-mother, who resists him. The ending, which hints at the father's ambisexuality and quasi-criminality, finds Arturo emigrating from the island to start his own life.

Some of the film does nice emotional burrowing, but, as with the novel, it is based on so eccentric a situation that "poetic" seems too broad a term to apply to it. How many of us know what it is like to be the child of a probable professional homosexual who abandons us for months at a time? A "poetic" film about a sensitive adolescent whose father turns out to be a Martian would strike almost as close. The situation seems specially manufactured to engender odd wistfulness.

Vanni de Maigret (Arturo) has a fine face and acts adequately. Reginald Kernan and Key Meersman, the father and step-mother, mime their parts competently but are obviously dubbed.

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

## ART

# *The Gioconda Affair*

There are interesting cases and then there are affairs. During the Truman Administration, if every appointed official had been found with his hand in the deep freeze, it still would only have been a case, although a fairly interesting one. By contrast, in the Ike Age, a Bostonian rug-peddler's Washington connection immediately became the Sherman Adams affair, not because used carpets are worse than new appliances but because of the light thrown upon the pulpit oratory of the administration, and historical recollections of that stern and rock-bound Puritan morality financed by the rum trade and the slave trade.

In Washington now, and in New York next month, there is taking place the Gioconda Affair, the least important aspect of which is the exhibition of the Mona Lisa at the National Gallery and the Metropolitan Museum.

As often happens, the first evidence that we are confronted with an authentic affair is found in journalistic reaction. *The Washington Post*, normally a respectable, even a serious, newspaper, handled the story in the manner of one of the New York evening papers doing a series on wife-swapping in the Westchester PTA.

From the day the story broke, the *Post* went into the dithers and is still there. The paper dispatched Edward Folliard to Paris and Folliard, normally a respectable, even a serious, political reporter, filed some of the most amazing copy since the old Hearst Task Force broke up, beginning with an account of the empty wall at the Louvre and peaking out with a two-part dream-interview with Madonna Lisa del Gioconda, during which that eminently serious Florentine matron spoke English with a French accent derived from Willy Howard. Not satisfied with these triumphs, the *Post* assigned a Paris man to write stories about Folliard writing stories about the Mona Lisa and sent a girl up from Washington to meet the boat in New York and

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The decision on the loan was made by or at the behest of the French cultural minister, André Malraux, as a gesture of Franco-American amity, but so tangled are the strains –and stresses – of the Affair that the reference ought to be to Franco-American spaghetti. The amity in Paris got off the ground with an outraged press crying out desperately against the loan. In Washington the cause of friendship was furthered at a press conference at which a Midwest reporter barbarously asked the French director of state museums whether there weren't some American pictures he might like to borrow in exchange and the conference was abruptly ended.

The picture got to the National Gallery at just about the same time that school let out for the Christmas holidays and was kept in the cellar for almost three weeks, or until the kids were back in school. The cellaring of the fine old masterpiece was a political rather than an anti-child decision, however, the thought being to have the President and Malraux open the exhibition in the presence of the Senate and the House jointly gathered in the Gallery on the eve of the 88th's convening.

It is hard to say how the Congressional showing actually affected the temper of Congress in regard to art. Members were jammed into the West Statuary Hall of the National Gallery for the occasion where they watched Malraux read at them inaudibly in French and then watched an official translator read at them inaudibly in English. That, one may presume, was bad, convincing some Congressmen that they had been right about art all along: it's incomprehensible and uncomfortable. On the other hand, it is worth noting that with an awful lot of Congress present, and with Dean Rusk on the platform along with the President, no voice was raised to ask why the State Department so readily admitted to this country that formidable ex-Communist, André Malraux. That's progress, and if art reproductions are really as adequate as Malraux believes, who needs the originals? Line the Louvre with books and get a little amity in the new world.

FRANK GETLEIN

# *Correspondence*

The New Republic *welcomes communications in regard to subjects of current interest. Those of 300 words or less are most suitable for publication.*

## The Real Work of Carleton Coon

*Sirs:*

The attempts of segregationists, some anthropologists, *et al* to employ "scientific" materials to prove the biological and genetic inferiority of Negroes, and the attempts of others to refute this thesis, have resulted in Carleton Coon's being credited with ideas not contained in his controversial and much referred to book, *The Origin of Races.*

From his article in *The New Republic* of January 5, I gather Donald C. Simmons thinks that Coon tentatively concluded that Negroes discovered fire only 40,000 years ago. No such conclusion was, or could be, made.

The origin of the Congoid (African Negro) subspecies is one of the greatest mysteries in anthropology. Less is known of its origin than of the other four races of mankind. What few scraps of evidence have been unearthed concerning the ancestors of the Negroes have been found in East and South Africa. The earliest trace of fire in association with a human habitation site found *thus far* in Africa, East Africa, is indeed only 40,000 years old. However, Coon takes pains to point out that the Negro home has traditionally been West, not East or South Africa, and "not a single scrap of evidence" has been found there.

The evidence from East and South Africa concerns peripheral, perhaps isolated Negro populations and not the principle center of Negro evolution. Such splinter groups always lag behind the main body. Even the most culturally advanced races, the Caucasoid and the Mongoloid races, have peripheral population that have, because of their isolation and other factors lagged behind the main body of their race's progress. The American Indians are an example of this.

Thus, Dr. Coon has not drawn any conclusions concerning Negro evolution. None can be made until some evi-



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dence from West Africa, the principal center of Negro evolution, has been unearthed.

*George R. Peterson*
*Woodside, N. Y.*

## New York's Striking Typographers

*Sirs:*

Had Murray Kempton gone into the composing room of his own newspaper, *The New York Post*, he could have learned that "the facts were simple" as he assures us (*NR*, December 22), but altogether different from those he uses as grounds for his conclusions about the strike of the typographers.

International Typographical Union members average $150 a week (before taxes, pension payments and dues), not $180. Negro ITU members work right in the *Post* composing room, contrary to Mr. Kempton's slander that ITU is a "Caucasian" union.

He complains that ITU asks as a basis for negotiation, $10 more than the $8 a week average raise over-two-years-package that the Newspaper Guild got. He fails to mention that the Guild has long had full sick pay (ITU gets only one day); Guild has a 35-hour week (ITU – 36¼); Guild gets a four-week vacation (ITU – three weeks); and the Guild gets severance pay of two weeks pay for each year worked in case of layoff or discharge, and after 25 years members receive full severance if they leave for any reason, including death (printers get three weeks' pay only in the event the paper closes down).

Mr. Kempton blames the union for the uncertain future of the *Post*, *Mirror*, and *Herald-Tribune*, for it is supposed to be keeping technological advance out of New York newspaper composing rooms. The fact is otherwise. New printing processes are in extensive operation at the *Daily News* and the *Times* (photocomposition) and all three editions of the *Times* (West Coast, Paris and New York) are automatically set from the same tape punched in New York by Teletypesetters. Local 6 has negotiated and instituted at the *Times* a model retraining program to give typesetters the opportunity to become Teletypesetters, and is now negotiating a similar contract to enable compositors to become photocomposition equipment operators. A number of men have already been put out of work by this latter process.

IBM now has a process whereby the stock market tables will be centrally transmitted from ticker to tape in seven minutes, eliminating at one blow all typesetters and Teletypesetters now working at setting these tables, and many Guild employees. *The Los Angeles Times* has just announced the conclusion of a month-long successful test of a process which punched a tape from the reporter's typewriter, justifies the lines, breaks the words correctly, and automatically sets the type.

AP and UPI already send out material on tape centrally punched to some newspapers. The tapes are automatically set in type, by-passing not only the printer but the men with the copy pencils and at the typewriters.

We know that another device is being perfected that will eliminate those fingers on the typewriter so important not only to Mr. Kempton: this one is a machine into which a by-line reporter in some news-gathering agency will talk, and a typewritten copy will materialize.

A short step of course is to how to hook it up to a tape-punching machine and thence to an automatic linotype machine. See it now: the Voice sits in a room whence the wires carry its bland, guaranteed-to-offend-no-one stores untouched by human brain or hands into print in 1,000 daily newspapers in the country. This is what automation means, and printers would rightly vote down any contract that agreed to their displacement on such a scale without some compensatory process – as in the contract Kaiser Steel just signed with the Steelworkers Union.

What we are witnessing is not a return of the Luddites but the threatened return on a vaster scale of the wretched social conditions that gave rise to the Luddites. Al Hayes, president of the AFL-CIO Machinists, predicted to an ILO audience that by 1970 "10 percent of the workforce – or 8,000,000 workers – will be unable to find employment of any kind in the American economy." Should the jettisoned workers bear the burdens alone?

*Samuel Coleman*
*New York City*


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